World Soccer®

AHEAD OF THE GAME SINCE 1960

TORRES
Chelsea's £50m gamble

GULLIT
Coaching in a war zone

DIEGO MILITO
Inter's forgotten man

IT'S BACK!

16 TEAMS... ONE PRIZE

Champions League gets serious

- Tactical analysis of every game
- Secret weapons, players to watch

PLUS

Europe's in-form strikers
January transfer deals
New York Cosmos

MARCH 2011 £3.80
Printed in the UK EXPORT
Australia $10.00 USA $7.99
www.worldsoccer.com

www.germany.travel

Germany
Simply inspiring

FIFA Women's World Cup Germany 2011™

On the ball with the beautiful game

Destination Germany for soccer, fun and new experiences! Join us for the FIFA Women's World Cup 2011™ and visit Germany this summer. Pack your jerseys and plan a circuit to get in on the world-class soccer action of FIFA Women's World Cup 2011™. Experience the best of Germany – before and after the games – charming beer gardens, centuries-old castles, and funky lederhosen included. **June 26 – July 17, 2011 in 9 host cities!** **www.germany.travel/fifawomensworldcup2011**

Supported by:

Travel Destination Germany
© German National Tourist Board

on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag

March 2011

ONCE AGAIN English football is out of step with the rest of the world. In the January transfer window, English clubs spent more – £225million – than the rest of Europe put together.

It could be argued that just one deal – Chelsea's British record capture of Fernando Torres from Liverpool – was responsible for the train of events that led many people to question, once again, the sanity of the modern game. But the spending by the likes of Manchester City and Aston Villa – at opposite ends of the Premier League – offers further proof that fear of failure is the key factor in determining club spending.

Torres may have been coveted by Roman Abramovich for many years, but January's deal was still a panic purchase by the Chelsea owner, who was worried that his side might slip out of contention for the Champions League.

It remains to be seen whether UEFA's Financial Fairplay proposals can create more of a level playing field. Of the Champions League contenders that we feature this month (previews start on page 45), half did not feel any need to reinforce their squads in the transfer window. The non-spenders included three of the favourites to triumph at Wembley in May: Barcelona, Arsenal and Manchester United.

Choosing a winner from such an illustrious field remains an impossible task. Hopefully, our previews can provide some signposts to what promises to be some intriguing contests.

Next month we unveil an exciting new look for the magazine, with some new features and extra analysis. Please look out for your copy of the April issue.

GAVIN HAMILTON, Editor
gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com

CONTENTS

COVER STORY

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
The knockout stage
45 Secret weapons, players to watch and tactical analysis of all eight ties as Europe's premier club competition gets serious

THE WORLD THIS MONTH
4 **...in pictures** the global game caught on camera
8 **Brian Glanville** ...on the late Nat Lofthouse...the disgrace of Richard Keys and Andy Gray...a fitting punishment for Ryan Shawcross and Glanville's First Law of Fleet Street
11 **David Conn** on the "super-agents"
12 **Paul Gardner** on head injuries

HEADLINERS
16 **People in the news**
Fernando Torres, Alberto Zaccheroni, Diego Milito, Corinthians, Zinedine Zidane

INSIDE FOOTBALL
20 **Keir Radnedge** on changes to the international calendar

NUMBERS
22 **The January transfer window**

DISPATCHES
24 **The big stories from our correspondents**
Brazil, Turkey, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Tunisia, France, Italy, Germany, Ukraine, USA, Philippines

SIX OF THE BEST
66 **Top strikers in Europe's domestic leagues**

FACE TO FACE
68 **Chuck Blazer**

TALENT SCOUT
72 **Tomorrow's stars today**
Michael Arroyo, Valentin Stocker, Dimitri Payet, Senijad Ibricic, five Asian Cup discoveries

SOCCER CITIES
76 **Munich**
Stadiums, history, what to see

WORLD SERVICE
83 **The ultimate global news and results section**

FAMOUS LAST WORDS
114 **Who said what** and why

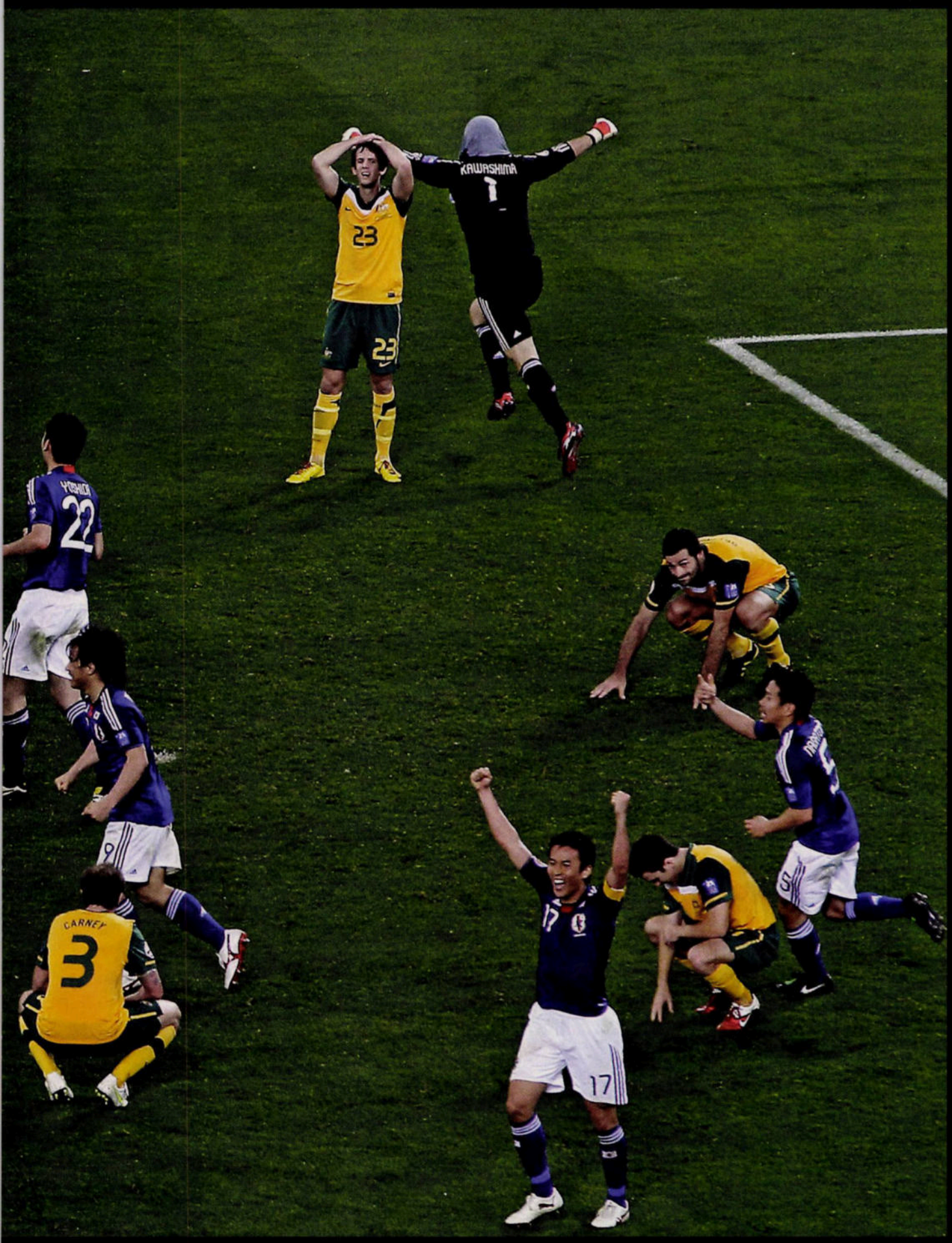
recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

SAVE MONEY ON WorldSoccer
SEE OUR SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTIONS OFFER ON PAGE 70

...IN PICTURES

The global game caught on camera

Japanese joy...players celebrate victory over Australia in the Final of the Asian Cup in Qatar. Japan recorded their fourth win in the competition to set a new record


KAWASHIMA
1
23
23
YOSHIDA
22
CARNEY
3
17
17

Initiation ceremony...Ronaldinho is welcomed by his new Flamengo team-mates

Two tribes...El Salvador and Honduras renew their rivalry at the Central American Cup

Bloody mess...UAE midfielder Subait Khater is hurt after a clash with an Iraq player at the Asian Cup

Anfield traitor...Liverpool fans burn the shirt of Fernando Torres after he signed for Chelsea

One of the boys...Mainz's Lewis Holtby joins the club's fans to celebrate the win against Kaiserslautern

Singing their hearts out...well-dressed North Korean fans respond to their "cheerleader" before the Asian Cup match against Iraq

Brian Glanville

...on the late Nat Lofthouse...the disgrace of Richard Keys and Andy Gray...a fitting punishment for Ryan Shawcross... and Glanville's First Law of Fleet Street

Silver train...two-goal Lofthouse brings the FA Cup back to Bolton in 1958

WHEN NAT LOFTHOUSE recently died at the age of 85, trailing, you might say, clouds of glory, he fully deserved the eulogies he received.

Thirty-three games for England and fully 30 goals, his nickname, "the Lion of Vienna", came after he had scored a memorable and typically courageous goal for England against Austria in May 1952. This was a time when friendlies had significance and under extreme, not to say ruthless, pressure, he ran half the length of the field with the ball, before driving it home and being knocked out in the process.

He scored hundreds more for Bolton Wanderers, his local club and the only one he ever played for.

He played in two FA Cup Finals, once on the losing side in the so-called "Matthews Final" of 1953 when he scored Bolton's first goal and they ultimately went down to defeat with 10 fit men. Five years later, he was the scorer of both goals in a Wembley victory against a cruelly depleted Manchester United, his second goal being a legal outrage when he was allowed to charge United's keeper, Harry Gregg, into the goal, barging him in the back when he was holding the ball in mid air.

This was followed by the colossal, inexcusable disappointment of not being picked for the England World Cup squad which went to Sweden for the World Cup finals. This despite the fact that the first-choice centre-forward, Manchester United's Tommy Taylor, who had in fact made his debut as inside-left to Lofthouse against Belgium in the Swiss World Cup of 1954, died pitifully at Munich.

ANDY GRAY and Richard Keys disgraced themselves by damning the female referee's assistant Sian Massey before ever a ball was kicked in the Wolverhampton Wanderers versus Liverpool game. How could she, they demanded, as a woman, understand the offside law?

Well, the truth of the matter is that hardly anybody does, and in any case, when it came to a difficult offside decision on Liverpool's first goal, Ms Massey called correctly and impressively.

> "When it came to a difficult offside decision, Ms Massey called correctly and impressively"

Making her point...but Massey was maligned even before a ball was kicked

The bleak truth is that not even many a weathered manager – and even one as respected as Harry Redknapp has admitted – can always make head or tail of what has happened to a rule which was never easy to interpret.

Indeed, some years ago, an experiment by scientists in Valencia suggested that no linesman had a chance. The need to follow the flight of a ball from the moment it was kicked to the point where it was collected by a player who, remember, could be offside only at the time the ball was kicked and, under a law not so long ago revised, was onside, anyway, if he were in line with the opposing defence, was impossible to fulfil.

Now that further prolix complication is placed on the law by the newish ruling that a player is not offside if he is not interfering with the play, offside decisions have surely become a nightmare for defenders and officials alike. The famous words of the late Bill Shankly come vividly to mind: "If a player's not interfering with the play, what's he doing on the field?"

By a particular irony Ms Massey's achievement was concurrent with a serious error by Mark Clattenburg, a referee not unknown for controversial decisions, failing to give West Bromwich Albion a palpable penalty at Blackburn Rovers, when the foul was clearly inside the box, not just outside.

Overall, the present crop of Premier League referees is a pretty dismal one. If, as a recent vote wants us to believe, Howard Webb is the best in the world, then heaven help us all. If he was worth his recent MBE, what would the likes of George Reader and Jack Taylor have merited for the impeccable way they handled the decisive game in 1950 and the 1974 Final respectively? Webb himself has admitted he should have expelled Nigel De Jong for his shocking first-half foul on Spain's Xabi Alonso in South Africa.

Among the fiercest castigators of the hapless Gray and Keys – hadn't they

learned to switch off their mikes after what happened to Ron Atkinson? – was Graham Poll, who, in his refereeing retirement, has become an opinionated pontificator. Yet he himself was the author of what has been flippantly termed "the three-card trick", when he inadvertently waved three yellow cards at the same player in the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

In a recent newspaper article Poll seemed curiously to contradict himself, referring to a notorious incident at Highbury in February 2005 when Wayne Rooney swore at him 27 times yet was not sent off. This, Poll bizarrely insisted, was the finest of all his 329 Premier League performances, though he now realises the damage he may have done to the game. Make what sense of that you can. Rooney, in any event, continues to curse at referees.

WHEN Ryan Shawcross, Stoke City's big, blond, centre-back, was sent off at Fulham, I shed no tears. His manager Tony Pulis was deeply sympathetic and appalled that he would miss two matches. I'd have been happy had Shawcross – whose immobility gave Fulham their first goal as well as their penalty – had stayed out of commission as long as one of his earlier victims, Arsenal's precocious Aaron Ramsey, whose leg was badly broken by a dreadful challenge in

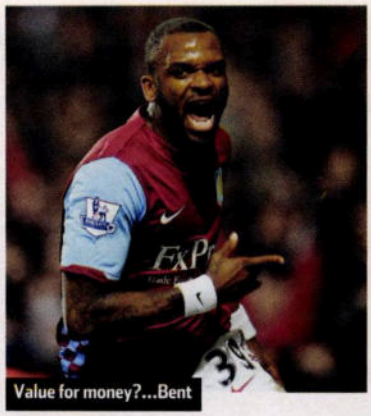
Gone...Shawcross (centre) is sent off at Fulham

February last year. Ramsey, lent in turn to Nottingham Forest and his original club, Cardiff City, has only just returned.

In an ideal world, though it will never happen, how right it would be if the perpetrator and victim spent the same time out of the game. And how crass of the Stoke chairman, Peter Coates, to reflect that Shawcross' form hasn't suffered since those events.

"LOYALTY'S what they shaft you with" is, in fact, widely known as "Glanville's First Law of Fleet Street," though I was flattered rather than put out when a leading sports columnist used it to head his attack on Sunderland's Steve Bruce, attributing it to business circles.

The burden of his song was simply that people who live in glasshouses


Value for money?...Bent

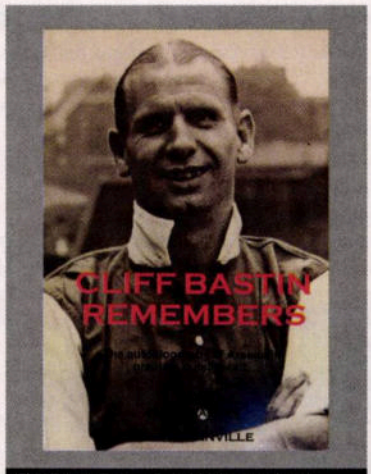
shouldn't throw stones, that while Bruce was damning departing striker Darren Bent for alleged disloyalty, he himself, as a manager, had walked out here and there, not least when he abandoned an embittered Crystal Palace.

Bent cannot be accused of disloyalty, though the way he so suddenly left Sunderland, for a great deal more money at Villa Park – in mid season – was, to say the least, insensitive.

Was he worth so much, £18million, which could even rise to a colossal £24m? Probably yes, if he can only continue to do what he expertly did on his debut for Villa when he scored the winning goal against Manchester City.

I always thought Bent hugely over-priced at £16m when he left Charlton Athletic for Tottenham Hotspur, though having shelled out all that money then and got much less when they sold him on to Sunderland, they will get a cut of fee paid by Villa.

Bent is no major star – he has failed to make an impact in the England team and his all-round game hardly matches that of today's most accomplished strikers – but at club level he does get goals and if they can keep Villa in the Premier League that money will have been well spent. ●



Cliff Bastin Remembers, the biography of Arsenal's legendary winger which Brian Glanville co-wrote at the age of 18, has been republished by GCR Books

GOALS
WE'D LIKE TO SEE AGAIN...

Perfect connection...Ahmed

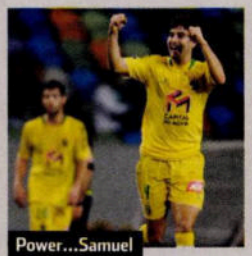
1 Yusef Ahmed, Qatar v China
Cushions the ball on his knee before volleying into the top corner

2 Freddy Guarin, Porto v Maritimo
A dipping, swerving shot from 40 yards

3 Miralem Sulejmani, Ajax v NAC Breda
Sweeping counter-attack finished off with a curling shot with the outside of the boot

4 Samuel Eto'o, Internazionale v Bologna
Nutmegs his marker and collects a back-heel from Diego Milito before curling a shot round the keeper

Curler...Eto'o (right)


Power...Samuel

5 Samuel, Pacos Ferreira v Sporting Lisbon
Unstoppable shot from the edge of the centre circle

6 Gokhan Gonul, Fenerbahce v Antalyaspor
A clever dribble before chipping the keeper from 22 yards

Non stop...Orozco (left)

7 Yohandry Orozco, Venezuela U20 v Peru U20
Runs from his own half, rides two tackles and shoots into the corner

To see clips of these goals, visit www.worldsoccer.com

NUMBERS GAME

8

days between coach Nasser Al Johar being appointed Saudi Arabia coach and being sacked

£996m

accumulated debt of Europe's 664 top-flight clubs

4

European countries – Austria, Belgium, Germany and Sweden - whose top-flight clubs' income exceeds outgoings

100

goals scored by Barcelona this season before the end of January, after Lionel Messi's second in the 5-0 Spanish Cup win over Almeria

16

postponements before the Scottish Cup third-round replay, originally scheduled for November 27, between Threave Rovers and Stenhousemuir could finally take place. Stenhousemuir won 5-1

22

different nationalities appeared in a Premier League match between Blackburn and West Bromwich Albion – a league record. Austria, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Congo, DR Congo, Croatia, Czech Republic, England, France, Grenada, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Norway, Paraguay, Romania, Scotland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, USA and Wales were all represented

REPORTS we couldn't make up

Stretching out...the Giggs fitness regime

YOGA SIDELINE

It's not just soap stars and celebrities who bring out the post-Christmas fitness DVD.

Long-serving Manchester United midfielder Ryan Giggs has released *Giggs Fitness*, a new yoga-inspired strength and conditioning workout DVD.

NOD AND A VINK

Marciano Vink, the former Holland midfielder who won the UEFA Cup in 1992 with Ajax and also played for Genoa, PSV Eindhoven, Den Haag and Ajax Cape Town, secured another memorable victory when he staked £3 in an Amsterdam casino fruit machine – and won £1,170,000.

"I still feel I am dreaming – this is fantastic," said Vink. "We already made a decent living, but this is the cherry on the cake."

PLAYBOY MODEL LAYS DOWN LAW

Former glamour model Izabela Lukomska-Pyzalska has taken over struggling Polish second-tier club Warta Poznan.

The former Playboy model says she will rule the club with "an iron fist" and hopes to see them once again established in the top flight. "I want the club to shine again. I believe that the team will play impressively and will attract more fans," says the new chairwoman.

"I used to work in a building company, which requires ruling with an iron fist. I will make sure that there is order and discipline."

In charge...Lukomska-Pyzalska

RUMOURS we'd like to believe

According to Dutch media sources and his agent, Ajax's promising young Danish midfielder Christian Eriksen will be one of the priorities this summer for Milan, who were pipped to the teenager's signature by the Amsterdammers back in 2008.

Losing friends...Luis Fabiano

German tabloid *Bild* takes the line Borussia Monchengladbach attacking starlet Marco Reus will be off soon, probably to his hometown club and runaway leaders Borussia Dortmund.

Despite signing a two-year contract extension with Sevilla last summer, Brazil striker Luis Fabiano seems more and more likely to be off-loaded at the end of the season. The word in Andalucia is that Sevilla are heartily sick of his diva-like behaviour and will listen to any offer around £12.5million. He is fussy though, recently turning down moves to Juventus and Corinthians in his homeland.

Interest...Saha

France Football thinks that there is plenty of mileage in rumours suggesting that Bordeaux are interested in Everton's former France front-man Louis Saha. Bordeaux coach Jean Tigana was once Saha's boss at Fulham and believes he would boost his side's often dormant firepower.

David Conn

The secret life of the super-agents

IN THE Premier League on January 31, Chelsea spent £71million buying Fernando Torres and David Luiz, Liverpool cascaded £35m of their £50m to Newcastle United for Andy Carroll, and the January spending record of £225m was comprehensively shattered. Yet still the football public knows precious little about how the deals work.

Which agents were involved? Who did they act for? What services did they perform? How much were they paid? Did they, in turn, pay anybody else?

All of this is kept secret and so opaque are transfer dealings that it is vital to peer in as far as possible whenever chinks of light are revealed.

For a brief couple of years, Manchester United published and declared to the Stock Exchange how much they paid agents when players were signed or had their contracts renegotiated. That transparency came about after United plc's then major shareholders, John Magnier and JP McManus, asked 99 archly pointed questions about the club's transfer dealings during their dispute with Alex Ferguson over the stud rights to Rock of Gibraltar, the horse they had given United's manager.

Questions – which were leaked to the press – about which agents were paid how much on United's deals were not answered publicly, but it emerged that the United manager's son, Jason Ferguson, had been involved in some. United then committed to Ferguson junior not working on the club's transfers, and to publishing agents' fees – a practice the Glazer family ended shortly after buying the club with all their borrowed millions in 2005.

The BBC produced a documentary, *Fergie and Son*, about the affair, and since then the United boss has not spoken to the BBC – which pays a fortune for Premier League TV rights.

When United signed Wayne Rooney from Everton in 2004, the club stated it had paid his agent, Paul Stretford, £1m rising to £1.5m, both for representing Rooney in his negotiations with the club, and for acting on behalf of the club in concluding the deal with the player. That firmly established the fact that despite FIFA's regulations prohibiting an agent from acting for two sides in a deal, and the apparent conflict of interest lurking in allowing it, in football, it was permitted, and the way things worked.

Then there are the so-called "super-agents," a term which has come about largely because of the secrecy surrounding how these men actually operate, anointing them with the reflected glory of the players or clubs they represent. The way one of them, Jorge Mendes, works has been partly illuminated because he is being sued by Formation, Paul Stretford's former agency, in a Porto court.

Formation claim they had a partnership agreement to promote Mendes' players in England between 2002 and 2004, and that they shared the fees when Hugo Viana went to Newcastle United and Nuno Capucho to Rangers in 2002. But then Mendes reneged, paying just £80,000 of his fee when Cristiano Ronaldo was signed by United. Then they claim Mendes paid them nothing when his client, Jose Mourinho, signed the Mendes players Ricardo Carvalho, Paulo Ferreira and Tiago for Chelsea in 2004.

> "Transfer dealings are so opaque that it is vital to peer in whenever chunks of light are revealed"

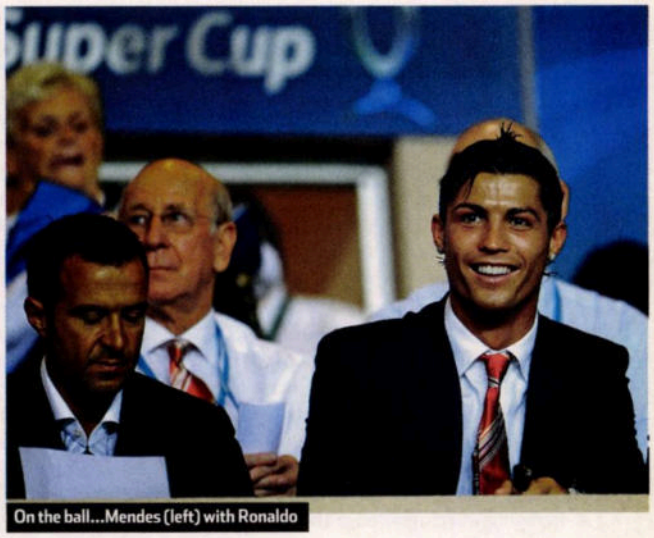
Mendes denies he owes Formation anything and the case proceeds, but the actual details of the deals were revealed after Chelsea and the FA were required by court orders to produce the original contracts. They showed that Chelsea agreed to pay Mendes' Gestifute agency €2.9m (£2.45m) in agent's fees when the players signed. A small part of that, €450,000 (£380,000), was paid on behalf of the players for Mendes representing them in their salary negotiations. The rest, €2.45m (£2.1m), was paid for duties the agent would perform for the club, including looking after the players and ensuring they went to training on time.

According to Porto statements from the summer, 2003, it also appears that Gestifute owned five per cent of the economic rights in Carvalho and Ferreira, so would have been entitled to €2.5m (£2.1m) of the €50m (£42.2m) transfer fees.

In one of their own defence documents, Gestifute claimed they were not paid directly at all by United for the Ronaldo deal, in which the club themselves declared £1.129m agents fees were paid. Mendes claimed that he was paid by another, Italian agent, Giovanni Branchini. The FA stated that United did pay £1m to an agent, not Mendes, although not confirming it was Branchini. Manchester United, Mendes and Branchini all declined to explain what Branchini did to merit being paid £1m by Manchester United when they signed a great young player in Ronaldo.

These few nuggets, still not the full story, of the Portuguese "super-agent," and the disputed account of how he made his fortune from football, have emerged almost eight years later, because of a court action.

The football world is likely never to find out where the money went, to whom, and for what, from the Premier League's January 31 2011 bonanza. ●



On the ball...Mendes (left) with Ronaldo

Paul Gardner

Head injuries that football cannot afford to ignore

I SUPPOSE WE COULD make a joke of this. "Any after-effects from your concussion?" "Concussion? What concussion? I don't remember any concussion." However, this is not a laughing matter; it is deadly serious – and I choose the word "deadly" with great care.

Concussions are a problem football has yet to face up to. Once in a while a serious incident will have the authorities issuing anodyne statements, reassuring everyone that all is well, precautionary measures are in place, more research is being done to make the sport even safer, and so on.

Such statements reflect the overall attitude of the football world, which I would describe as one of complacency.

In January we had a perfect example at the very highest level. During a game at Blackpool, Manchester United's young Brazilian defender Rafael went down after a clash of heads with Marlon Harewood. The game was delayed for some eight minutes while Rafael was put in a neck brace and carried off on a stretcher. He was taken straight to hospital, where it was confirmed he had concussion but no broken bones.

The way that Rafael's injury was handled was a massive improvement on the good old days, when he might well have been doused with cold water and sent back into the game.

But manager Alex Ferguson's quick statement about the injury was not so comforting. "It's a straightforward one," he said. "Rafael has concussion and will miss Saturday's game."

That is complacency writ large, because no one should ever describe a concussion as "straightforward". We simply do not know enough about its causes and – something that is particularly relevant for football – its long-term effects to be so dismissive.

No doubt it suits those who want, for whatever reasons, to present football as benign family entertainment to downplay the problem of injuries.

We have had examples lately of a TV company deciding not to show replays of horrendous broken-leg injuries for fear of offending viewers. Refusing to acknowledge that football is a sport in which possibly serious head injuries occur frequently comes within the same category of protective censorship. Protective and dangerous.

The Rafael incident occurred at the very moment when the whole subject of concussions in sport exploded – not for the first time – in the American media.

The sport in the spotlight is gridiron. It is coming under withering criticism for being highly dangerous and one which has far too high a rate of serious head injuries and, yes, deaths.

So serious are the accusations that the *New Yorker* magazine gave 12 pages to an investigation titled "Does Football Have A Future?" Such has been the impact of the criticism that the National Football League (which already has a Head, Neck and Spine Injury Committee) talks of "changing the culture" in an effort to cut down on violent play.

Case in point...Manchester United defender Rafael is carried off concussed at Blackpool

"If football knows – and how can it not? – about the potential dangers and fails to make massive efforts to minimise them, it is surely guilty of negligence"

Soccer should be paying attention to gridiron, which is trying to face up to a series of related problems. If the sport is seen as simply too risky, then parents will not permit their sons to play. There were 295 fatalities in high-school gridiron between 1982 and 2009, over 10 per year. Strong measures to reduce this alarming stat have been taken, including better supervision at practice (where a majority of the injuries occur) and a ban on a concussed player re-entering a game.

But the high-school game is, inevitably, greatly influenced by the pro game. Kids copy their idols. Getting the pros to change their game, to make it less violent, is the difficult bit.

The main concerns for gridiron – obviously – are the deaths and paralyses, which are immediate and distressing evidence of a problem.

Such dramatic incidents are not frequent in soccer but researchers have also been focusing on the possible long-term effects of repeated concussions, and this is where the game needs to pay serious attention.

For a start, it has been found young players ("developing brains") are susceptible to "second-impact syndrome" – a strong motive for keeping kids even suspected of having suffered concussion from returning to the action.

But the most important point for the football authorities to take note of concerns the long-term effect of repeated "subconcussions". We are here into the world of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a comparatively new disorder with most of the research having been performed over the past year. We now know – or we believe we know – it is not, as once thought, the repeated heading itself that presents a danger to soccer players, but rather the inevitable succession of head clashes – the sort of thing that Rafael suffered.

Maybe. The fact is we're not certain, and that lack of certainty demands great caution. We are, after all, dealing with head injuries and long-term effects that can result in death or severe brain damage. The subject cannot be taken lightly. But how to tackle it without introducing

major changes into the sport? The idea of gridiron without violence and crunching collisions seems nonsensical, it could only mean the birth of a radically different sport.

For soccer the problem is identical. Of course, the constant head clashes could be banished with a simple rule change banning heading, but would football be football without heading?

While FIFA reported a significant reduction in injuries of all types during the 2010 World Cup, that tells us very little about the hidden long-term effects of subconcussions or minor head clashes, which might not be classified as injuries at all. CTE does not announce its presence with dramatic injuries; it is an insidious, but growing threat.

Legal action

Also growing is the threat of legal action. If football fails to take every precaution to ensure the safety of its players, it is leaving itself open to being sued. If football knows – and how can it not? – about the potential dangers and fails to make massive efforts to minimise them, it is surely guilty of negligence.

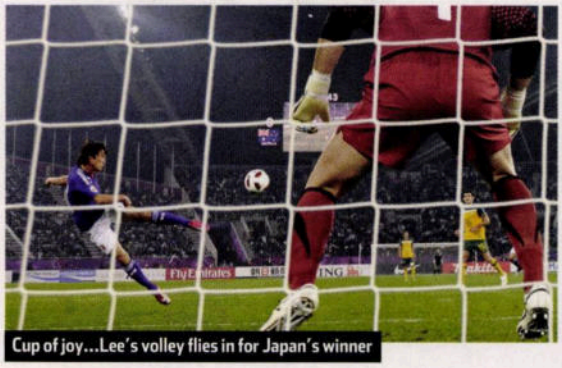
It is no exaggeration to say every English Premier League game includes at least one episode of a head clash where one or both players need some sort of treatment, however rudimentary it may be. In most cases they are quickly sent back into the action. Should they be? Are we sure that is the sensible thing to do? And what about kids? Simple fear of the "second-impact syndrome" surely dictates they should not be allowed to re-enter the game. Come to that, should they be heading the ball at all?

The *New Yorker* tells of a 44-year-old former pro gridiron player who committed suicide. His autopsy revealed that he had "brain tissue resembling that of an 85-year-old man with Alzheimer's". A dramatic example of CTE, but one case proves nothing.

What is needed is a major trial of the long-term effects of repeated heading and head clashes. This would be a difficult, lengthy and expensive affair, needing to involve hundreds of players. But football is awash with money, and until it finances such research it cannot be said to be taking the safety of its players seriously.

At the moment, football is run by football people. It writes its own rules, albeit through the moribund International Board. But a cavalier attitude to the dangers inherent in the game – one that allows Ferguson to talk of a "straightforward concussion" – may lead to the day when the rules are dictated by lawyers and insurance companies. ●

HEROES...



Cup of joy...Lee's volley flies in for Japan's winner

● TADANARI LEE

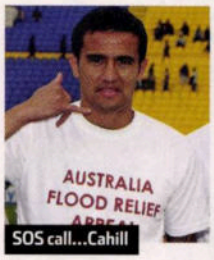
The Japan striker, who made his international debut earlier in the competition, hit a stunning volley in extra time against Australia in the Final to win the Asian Cup.

● UEFA

Even though the Euro 2012 qualifier in Serbia on March 25 is officially being played behind closed doors, UEFA will allow the 200 Northern Ireland fans who had already booked their trip to attend.

● TIM CAHILL

Offered a prize – which included a visit to his private box at Everton – to help raise money for the victims of the flash floods in Queensland, Australia. He donated the prize via a telethon in Australia, and performed a goal celebration at the Asian Cup to encourage people to phone in and make a bid.

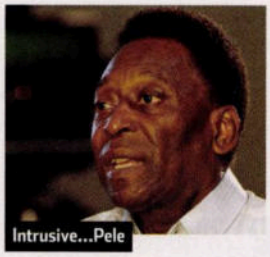


SOS call...Cahill

& VILLAINS

● PELE

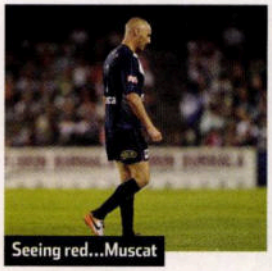
Not noted as a regular user of London's Jubilee Line, he made a public intervention in the debate over the future use of the 2012 Olympic Stadium, backing Tottenham Hotspur's bid to take over the stadium after the Games.



Intrusive...Pele

● RYAN BABEL

Mocked up an image of Howard Webb in Manchester United shirt on his Twitter account, following Liverpool's FA Cup third round defeat at Old Trafford. Was soon on his way out of Anfield to join Hoffenheim in Germany.



Seeing red...Muscat

● KEVIN MUSCAT

A shocking tackle by the Melbourne Victory defender in the A-League derby was bad enough. The histrionics as he was shown the red card arguably deserved more than the eight-match ban he received.

March 2011 Vol 51 No 6

EDITOR
Gavin Hamilton
ART EDITOR
Gary Payne
ASSISTANT EDITOR
Nich Hills
PICTURE EDITOR
Duncan Bond
NEWS EDITOR
Jamie Rainbow
EDITORIAL SECRETARY
June Hiscock
PICTURES
Pictures copyright: Press Association Images, Getty Images, Action Images and Reuters

Thanks this issue to
Mike Hughes, Peter Neish, Dave Rallis, Christian Radnedge

EDITORIAL
Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU
Tel: +44 (0) 20 314 84817
Fax: +44 (0) 20 314 88130
E-mail: world_soccer@ipcmedia.com

ADVERTISING AND SPONSORSHIP
Lee Hilton
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Tom Jennings
PRODUCTION CONTROLLER
Yee Lei Sheng

MANAGING DIRECTOR Paul Williams
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Hamish Dawson

Display ads +44 (0) 20 314 82823
Classified ads +44 (0) 20 314 82823
Sponsorship +44 (0) 20 314 82516
Back issues +44 (0) 20 314 84816
Binders +44 (0) 20 314 84816

International licensing enquiries
+44 (0) 20 314 85490
E-mail: bianca_hamilton-foster@ipcmedia.com

IPC|INSPIRE

SUBSCRIPTIONS ORDER HOTLINE
+44 (0)845 676 7778
E-mail: ipcsubs@qss-uk.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES
Annual subscription is for 12 months (13 issues, prices include postage) UK: £48.10
Europe/Eire (inc. VAT): 78.95euros (airmail)
USA: $99.45 (airmail)
Rest of world: £83.15 (airmail)

Periodicals paid at Rahway, NJ Postmaster: send address changes to *World Soccer*, c/o MAIL America, 365 Blair Road, Avenel NJ 07001, USA. USPS004075

SUBSCRIPTIONS DEPARTMENT
Rockwood House, 9-17 Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 3DH, England
Tel: +44 (0) 1444 475 675

WorldSoccer is a member of ESM EUROPEAN SPORTS MAGAZINES
● A Bola (Portugal) ● Don Balon (Spain) ● Fanatik (Turkey) ● Kicker (Germany) ● Sport-Express (Russia) ● Sport/Foot (Belgium) ● TIPS Bladet (Denmark) ● World Soccer (UK)

13 STORIES YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

SWITZERLAND
Platini's destiny
The Frenchman was set to be re-elected unopposed for a second term as UEFA president. More, page 20

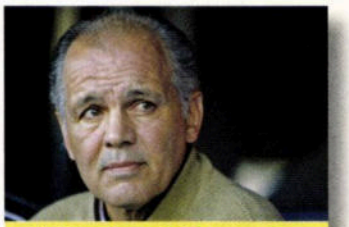
ENGLAND
Chelsea smash transfer record
Fernando Torres left Liverpool in a £50million British record transfer. More, page 16

SPAIN
Mourinho feels the heat
Real Madrid brought in Emmanuel Adebayor on loan but lost ground in the title race. More, page 32

COLOMBIA
Corinthians crash out
The ambitious Brazilian side lost their Libertadores Cup qualifier to Tolima of Colombia. More, pages 19 and 90

MOROCCO
Nations Cup triumph
The Moroccans were confirmed as 2015 African Nations Cup hosts. More, page 88

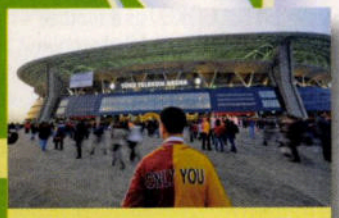
BRAZIL
Big stars head home
Ronaldinho was the latest Brazilian to return after a lucrative career in Europe. More, page 24



ARGENTINA
Sabella quits Estudiantes
The coach of the apertura champions resigned ahead of the new clausura campaign. More, page 94

UKRAINE
Dnipro spend big
The Ukrainians were one of Europe's biggest spenders in the January transfer window. More, page 39

RUSSIA
Gullit's new challenge
Ruud Gullit was the surprise choice as coach of Chechnya side Terek Grozny. More, page 30



TURKEY
New stadium, old problem
The opening of Galatasaray's new stadium was overshadowed by a row which saw the Prime Minister walk out of the opening ceremony. More, page 27

QATAR
Japan win Asian Cup
Japan beat Australia in extra time to win a record fourth continental title. More, pages 17, 28 and 96

ITALY
Foreign bodies
Roma could become the first Serie A club to have non-Italian owners. More, page 36

SAUDI ARABIA
Position vacant
The Saudi federation reacted to a disastrous Asian Cup by sacking two coaches in the space of nine days. More, page 31

HEADLINERS

People in the news...on and off the pitch

Fernando Torres

Spanish striker joins Chelsea in record deal

ENGLAND

JUST WHEN IT LOOKED as if football's transfer dealings had fallen into line with the rest of the global economy, along came Roman Abramovich's Chelsea to blow the market apart on the final day of the January window with a £50million deal for Liverpool striker Fernando Torres.

Torres agreed to a British record move on a day of frantic trading that also saw Liverpool re-invest almost three-quarters of the Torres fee in a £35m move for Newcastle striker Andy Carroll which made the 22-year-old the most expensive British footballer ever.

A decline in Liverpool's fortunes since their 2007 Champions League Final appearance and the sale of key players, such as Xabi Alonso and Javier Mascherano, had prompted Torres to question his long-term commitment to Liverpool and he submitted a written transfer request three days before the close of the transfer window.

"I felt from last summer that I need to take a step forward in my career," says Torres. "I am joining a team that is at the top level, there is not another level after Chelsea."

In Torres, Chelsea have signed a player long coveted by Abramovich. But the capture of Torres marks a significant change of strategy for the club's Russian billionaire owner.

Last summer, Chelsea eased a number of big earners off their payroll. The likes of Michael Ballack, Deco and Joe Cole left and the club looked to the youth system to fill some of the gaps. The strategy was partly an acknowledgement that Chelsea's position at the top of the Premier League spending league had been usurped by Manchester City, and partly a signal that Abramovich was keen to ensure that Chelsea moved towards compliance with UEFA's proposed regulations on Financial Fairplay (FFP).

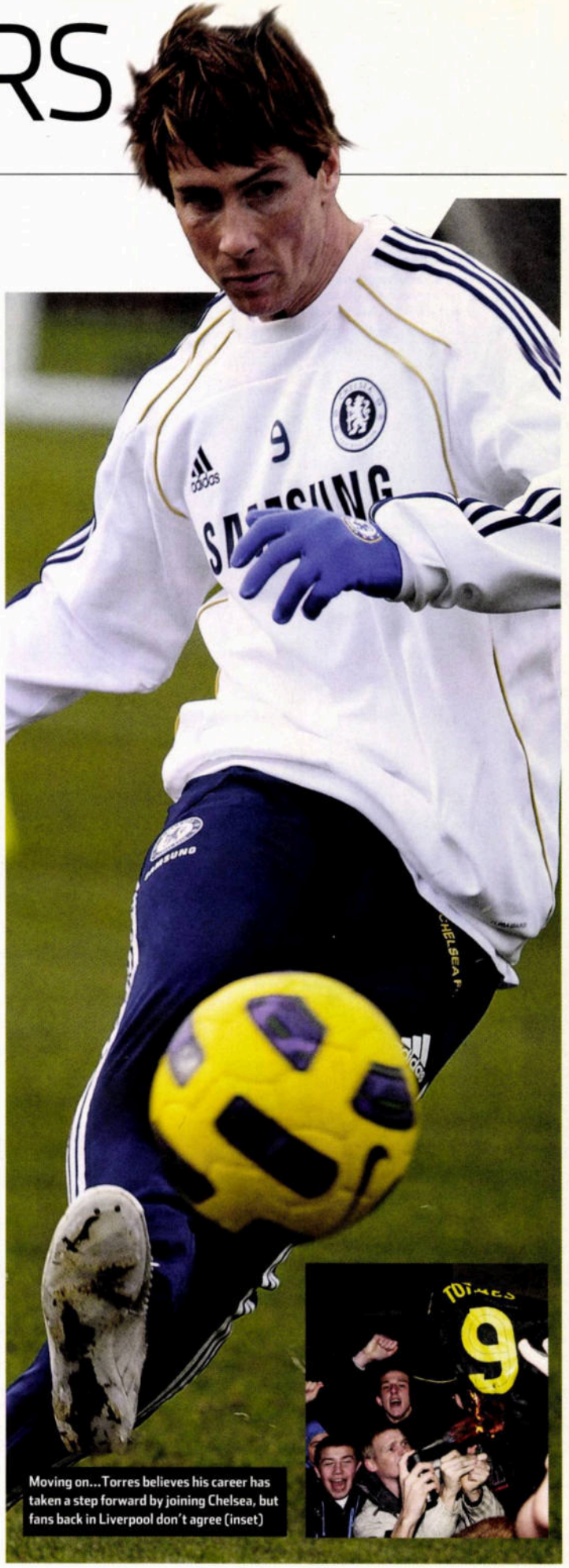
Now, after the signing of Torres, and a £25m deal for Brazilian defender David Luiz from Benfica, Abramovich has returned to his big-spending ways with a vengeance. Although the Russian continues to reject any contact with the media, it is safe to surmise that he saw the January window as Chelsea's best chance to land Torres, with Manchester City having brought in Edin Dzeko from Wolfsburg earlier in the month. It was also a last chance for large-scale spending before UEFA's FFP regulations kick in.

On the day that the Torres and David Luiz deals were completed, Chelsea also announced annual losses of £70m, yet club officials remain confident that they will be in a position to comply with UEFA's new rules.

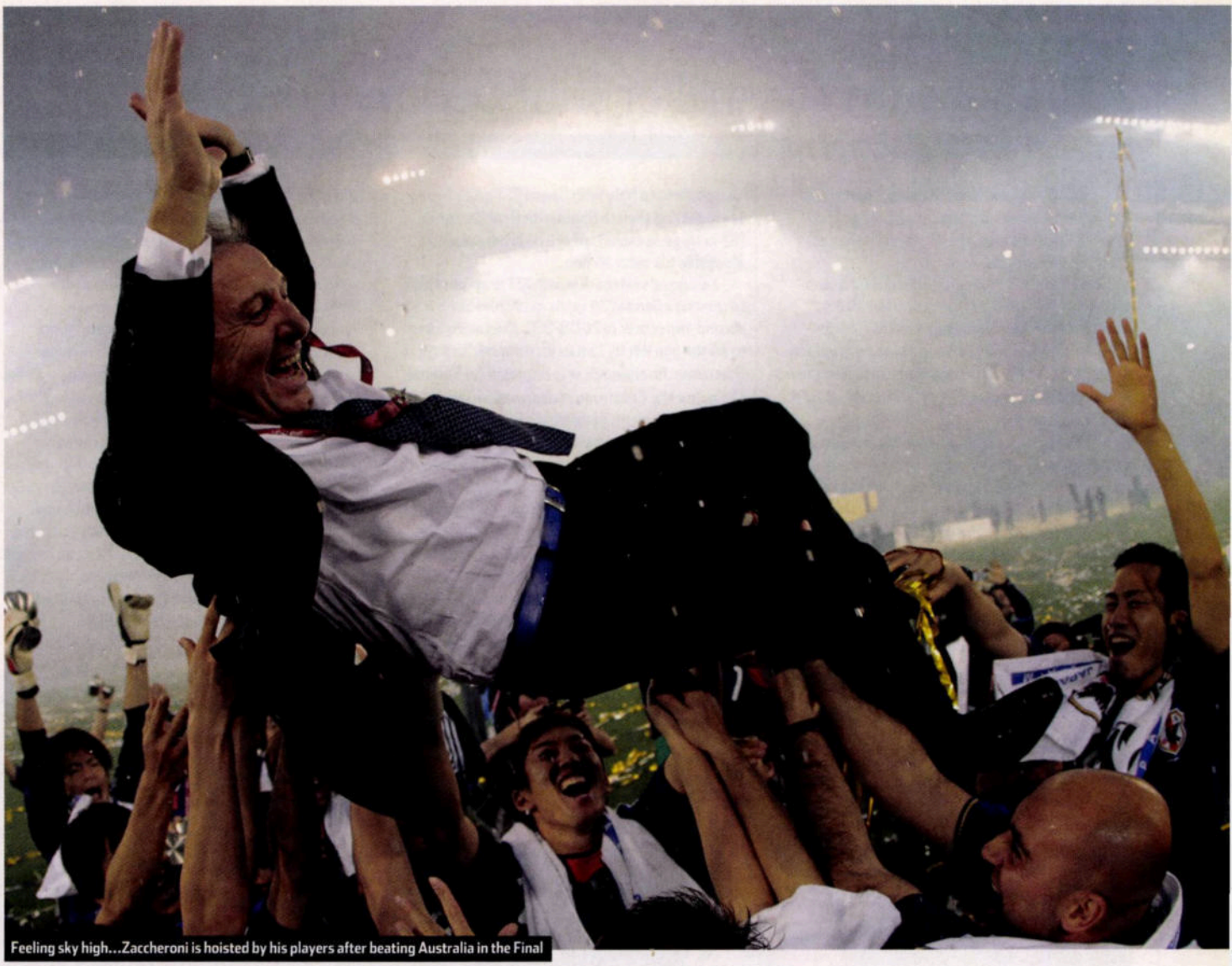
John Holmesdale

WORLD'S BIGGEST TRANSFERS

1	Cristiano RONALDO	Manchester Utd to Real Madrid, 2009	£80m
2	Zlatan IBRAHIMOVIC	Internazionale to Barcelona, 2009	£58m
3	KAKA	Milan to Real Madrid, 2009	£56m
4	Fernando TORRES	Liverpool to Chelsea, 2011	£50m
5	Zinedine ZIDANE	Juventus to Real Madrid, 2011	£47m
6	Luis FIGO	Barcelona to Real Madrid, 2000	£37m
7	Hernan CRESPO	Parma to Lazio, 2000	£35.5m
8	Andy CARROLL	Newcastle United to Liverpool, 2011	£35m
9	David VILLA	Valencia to Barcelona, 2010	£34.2m
10	Gianluigi BUFFON	Parma to Juventus, 2001	£32.6m



Moving on...Torres believes his career has taken a step forward by joining Chelsea, but fans back in Liverpool don't agree (inset)



Feeling sky high...Zaccheroni is hoisted by his players after beating Australia in the Final

Alberto Zaccheroni
Italian celebrates Asian Cup success

JAPAN

WITH no experience of the international game and having never worked outside his native Italy, there was some surprise when Alberto Zaccheroni was chosen to lead Japan following the World Cup finals in South Africa.

However, just eight matches after his first game in charge – in which his side beat Argentina 1-0 in October – the 57-year-old is in an unimpeachable position, having steered his new employers to the Asian Cup title.

Japan claimed the title with a 1-0 win over Australia in Doha's Khalifa Stadium, with Zaccheroni playing a key role in turning the Final in his team's favour.

Substitute Tadanari Lee scored the only goal with a wonderfully struck volley deep into extra time as Japan claimed the title – the country's record-breaking fourth – in the Qatari capital.

Fittingly, the cross for Japan's winner was delivered from the left by Yuto Nagatomo, who had earlier been moved from his usual position at left-back into a midfield berth following a bout of mid-match tinkering by Zaccheroni.

"After changing the position of Nagatomo, we looked better," said Zaccheroni. "We could not really go forward much – although this was not a problem with the strikers but a problem with the midfielders.

"I had the option to use Yasuyuki Konno as a defensive midfielder and push Yasuhito Endo and Makoto Hasebe forward, but I changed Nagatomo's position and from that point Australia looked kind of loose. I was surprised because they were so compact before."

Having tried to hire the likes of Manuel Pellegrini and Marcelo Bielsa to replace World Cup coach Takeshi Okada before the appointment of Zaccheroni, the Japanese have every reason to be more than satisfied with the work already done by the Italian.

"He is doing his best to understand Japan and communicate with the players," says national captain and Wolfsburg midfielder Hasebe. "Such sincerity has been felt by the players and led them to have confidence in him."

Japan Football Association president Junji Ogura, the man responsible – along with technical director Hiromi Hara – for hiring Zaccheroni, was also full of praise.

"He has a lot of experience managing big clubs like Milan and Juventus, but this is the first time that he has worked with a national team," said Ogura. "But he has shown a lot of passion for working with the players and developing them as a national team, and that is why he has been so successful."

Michael Church

Diego Milito
Italian award for striker snubbed by FIFA

ITALY

NO ONE, apart from the player himself, was more delighted to see Diego Milito voted Italian players' player of the year than Jose Mourinho.

Real Madrid's Portuguese coach had been upset and surprised by the centre-forward's omission from the 23-strong shortlist for the FIFA World Player of the Year award and, indeed, by the general lack of recognition which he believed his European champions from Internazionale last season had earned.

Milito remained restrained in his reactions, but then the 31-year-old Argentina striker has experienced most of football's ups and downs in a career which has taken him on a bumpy ride since he first turned professional at 19 with Racing Club of Avellaneda.

He began his career very much in the shade of defender brother Gabriel who played for Racing's local rivals Independiente, but after five years with the former world club champions he moved to Europe, first to Italy with Genoa (33 goals in two seasons) and then to Spain with Real Zaragoza (53 in three seasons), where he briefly played alongside his older sibling.

Zaragoza's relegation in 2007 prompted him to return to Genoa (24 goals made him Serie A's second-top scorer in 2008-09), then on to Inter to fill the gap left by Zlatan Ibrahimovic's move to Barcelona. Ibrahimovic was swapped for Samuel Eto'o, but the Cameroon striker was in no way a direct replacement, yet perhaps not even Mourinho expected Milito to shine as he did.

Still, any striker who can point to a career average of around one goal every two games has a CV to envy and Milito rammed home the point with the two goals which beat Bayern Munich in last season's Champions League Final in Madrid as he played a key role in the treble triumph of 2010.

He was voted UEFA's top forward of the year as well as being the European federation's player of the year, but all that appeared to be forgotten when the FIFA gala fuss was showered over Leo Messi, Xavi and Andres Iniesta. Mourinho was not impressed. After receiving his own award as the world's top coach he made a point of celebrating with Inter's entourage and again pointed out Milito's relegation to the party shadows.

How Mourinho must wish that speculation about Milito following him to Real last summer had been rewarded. With Gonzalo Higuain injured, Madrid's management were said to be perfectly happy with Karim Benzema as back-up, though the chasing around during the transfer window – which ended with Emmanuel Adebayor bringing his unpredictable talents to the Bernabeu – says it all about Mourinho's opinion of the Frenchman.

Of course, Milito does not parade the outgoing style of a Messi, a Ronaldo or a Kaka, but as he says himself: "If the guys who play with me and against me week-in, week-out, think I'm worth their own prize that is more than enough for me."

Keir Radnedge

Power surge...Milito has more than filled the gap left by Ibrahimovic's departure from Inter

Corinthians
Long Libertadores wait goes on

BRAZIL

THE final year of Ronaldo's career was supposed to be crowned by carrying Corinthians to Libertadores Cup glory. However, the dream died almost as soon as it had begun.

Things went wrong on the final day of last year's domestic season. The Sao Paulo giants ended their centenary year with a 1-1 draw against already-relegated Goias, which meant they would have to go through the continental qualifying round against Deportes Tolima of Colombia – and there is no doubt that Corinthians took the upcoming campaign too lightly.

Captain and centre-back William retired, while midfielder Elias – so effective buzzing when around the statuesque Ronaldo – was sold to Atletico Madrid and neither was replaced. Striker Liedson was brought back from Portugal to take some of the pressure off Ronaldo, but he arrived so late in the day that he would only be eligible for the group phase – which now goes ahead without Corinthians.

Tolima thoroughly deserved their triumph. The Colombians were dangerously underestimated in Brazil despite their impressive form last year both domestically and in the Sudamericana Cup.

They were the better team in both legs, playing a cautious possession game in the 0-0 draw in Sao Paulo, where they broke to good effect and were unfortunate to have a goal ruled out for offside.

On home ground at Ibague they were much more positive and could easily have been three goals up in the first 15 minutes. Corinthians tightened the game up, but then Tolima's new signing, veteran Elkin Murillo, who used to be compared to Faustino Asprilla, laid on two goals, with a through ball for Danny Santoya and a delightful cross for Wilder Medina.

Corinthians lost all hope when their Peruvian midfielder Luis Ramirez was sent off within two minutes of being introduced, but Tolima keeper Anthony Silva hardly had a shot to save over the two legs.

Next morning at Sao Paulo airport the Brazilian players were met by a bus on the runway to drive past an angry crowd. Meanwhile, irate fans invaded the training ground to protest.

Corinthians' Libertadores dream is over until 2012 – when Ronaldo will surely not be around to help them scale the mountain.

Tim Vickery

No way through...Ronaldo struggles against Tolima in Colombia

Zinedine Zidane
"Zizou" under fire for Qatar cash-in

FRANCE

Ambassador...Zidane in Qatar

SEPP BLATTER and his FIFA cohorts are not the only ones feeling the heat after the decision to take the 2022 World Cup to Qatar. In France, national icon Zinedine Zidane finds himself accused of selling his soul in his role as ambassador to the Qatari bid.

Reports of Zidane earning astronomic sums – *Le Journal du Dimanche* suggests the pay cheque was €1million (£840,000), while Australia's Herald Sun claimed he banked A$15m (£9.5m) – for his promotional assistance have sparked outrage in his homeland, arguably doing his reputation even more damage than his infamous World Cup Final head-butt in 2006.

Once lauded for his extraordinary ball skills, humility and charitable works, Zidane has become a marked man and his critics have no inclination to buy the theory that "ZZ", a man with deep Algerian roots, was merely throwing his weight behind the campaign of fellow Arabs.

Broadcasters, journalists and bloggers have all denounced what they see as a Gulf gold grab. But nothing has wounded Zidane more than the high-profile attacks he has been subject to recently.

Yannick Noah, the tennis champion turned pop singer who is arguably the most popular public figure in France, left no one in any doubt of his feelings on the matter ("I adore Zizou but this Qatar thing stinks"), while in a magazine interview, comedian and writer Christophe Aleveque said: "For me this is a form of prostitution. This guy is a whore. I hope he gives the money he made to charity. If not it's a scandal.

"Guys like Platini and Cantona prove footballers can have more than two brain cells. In general, exceptional players are intelligent. The exception to the rule is Zidane, who is just an advertising hoarding. He has no opinion on any issue, never takes a position. He's a bland person who outrageously uses his image to make a maximum amount of cash."

Never slow to retaliate during his playing career, Zidane instructed his lawyers to sue for damages to his "honour, dignity, probity and reputation", and though Aleveque has expressed regret, he maintains his comments were justified.

A messy business indeed.

Nick Bidwell

Keir Radnedge

Platini's dates with destiny

The UEFA president will play a crucial role in any debate over changes to the international calendar

AS MICHEL PLATINI nears unopposed re-election as president of UEFA and a second four-year term in office, it's impossible to see his first stint in anything but a positive light. While some scepticism may exist over the practicalities of Financial Fairplay and his opening of the Champions League group door to more of middle Europe, his instincts are entirely justifiable.

However, whether his revisionist approach to the job – that is, reverting to the Havelange/Blatter-type executive-president status – is in the long-term interests of the professional game is another matter entirely.

Several high-level speakers at a recent seminar on the dangers of uncontrolled internet-fuelled betting pointed out that one of football's weak points was how the evolution of the game's governing structures had failed to match the demands of the commercial and financial explosion of the past two decades.

Platini has bounced up the power ladder in remarkable fashion: from national captain to coach, from World Cup organiser to FIFA president's counsellor and, since his ousting of Lennart Johansson in 1997, to UEFA president.

When I once asked Platini why take the latest step, he replied: "Because I learned after going into FIFA that without votes you have no power."

The wielding of power is one issue, knowing when not to wield it is another. Far be it from anyone in the media to criticise him for his readiness to broach an opinion, but it is fascinating to see Platini's ubiquitous status.

Ubiquitous presence...Platini

It's not his fault that the media should regularly seek his opinion on issues of every shape and size. Lately we have Platini advocating, naively, a Gulf-wide hosting of the 2022 World Cup; proposing that UEFA revive the European Footballer of the Year award; and acquiescing, via two pages of the newly FIFA-friendly *L'Equipe*, in the comparative simplicity of staging 2022 in mid-winter.

On the latter issue it seems there may be more at stake than a guess at what the future might hold or a wish to stand behind his mentor, Sepp Blatter, who has been busily trying to retreat from his politically damaging championing of a winter World Cup.

The International Olympic Committee, despite emollient words from president Jacques Rogge, is also suspicious about how a clash of dates – not to mention sponsors and TV time – could be avoided between a winter World Cup and the 2022 Winter Games (which are locked into a two-week time-frame between mid-January and the end of February).

International calendar

FIFA has issued a controversy-calming statement denying any current plans for a winter World Cup. This has not, however, reduced speculation about future plans after reports in Germany that Platini is planning to reform the international calendar.

According to reports, Platini is behind a plan so revolutionary that confirmation and publication are being held back until the summer so as not to compromise re-election prospects for himself within UEFA and for Blatter, who stands in June for a fourth term as FIFA president.

Platini led the project which saw the creation of the present calendar after being engaged by Blatter as "presidential counsellor" in 1998 after the Swiss took over the leadership of FIFA. Now the suggestion is that, from 2015, the season in Europe would run not from August to May but – as in most of the rest of the world – from February to November.

Club football would then be ring-fenced from April until October, when the Champions League and Europa League Finals would be staged. This would leave a slice of the season to be taken up solely by international football, with the major World and European Championship action taking place in February/March – as the African Nations Cup and other regional championships do already – directly after the winter close-season.

The idea is that this would bring all the world's seasons into line while

Read more from Keir Radnedge at worldsoccer.com

contributing to an improvement in the standard of football at the World Cup as players would not be so tired after a long domestic campaign.

Some 12 of UEFA's 53 members already play a spring-autumn season: Armenia, Belarus, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Republic of Ireland, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Latvia, Norway and Sweden.

Contentious tournament

An intriguing extra issue arises from the "guarantee" of no international games between April and October, and this could be significant for the increasing contentious football tournament at the Olympic Games, which falls between July/August.

Most observers of the regular scraps between FIFA and the IOC agree that football does not need the Olympic Games – and the Olympic Games do not need football. The pair can be mutually exclusive powers in world sport.

Brazilians will think it inconceivable that football should be absent from the 2016 Games in football-mad Rio de Janeiro. But after that, who knows? Scrapping Olympic entry could serve as an acceptable price to persuade western Europe's most powerful leagues and clubs to turn their seasons around.

Confused noises have been heard. Asian confederation president Mohamed Bin Hammam said initially that he did not see why a winter World Cup should pose serious problems for Europe; then he turned round on himself and insisted that Qatar was not behind the idea.

A predictable outcry of concern about the tradition of the winter holiday programme came from England, although Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson reminded anyone who cared to listen that he had long been in favour of a winter break.

The catch of a winter World Cup is in the essential "dead time". Players and teams would need a minimum of three club-free weeks before the finals begin: two weeks recuperation and preparation, and one week in the host nation to acclimatise. This would mean that players from 24 of the 32 finalists would be kicking their heels back home amid fans' frustration while the closing stages of the World Cup are played out.

Discussions over a winter World Cup and a seasonal switch are not necessarily linked, and it will be fascinating to see how Platini positions himself on both issues over the next four years – before he considers whether to run for FIFA president, maybe, in 2015. ●

"Reports in Germany claim Platini is planning to reform the international calendar"

Power games...(from left) Prince Ali, Blatter and Bin Hammam

Bin Hammam's dilemma

WILL he or won't he? Mohamed Bin Hammam has used the opportunity of January's massive media focus on Qatar and the Asian Cup to throw a series of jibes at FIFA and, by extension, president Sepp Blatter.

But, while the Asian confederation leader has echoed media and other observers' demands for an overhaul of structure and personnel at the top of the world federation, he has remained uncommitted over whether he is prepared to lead the charge at congress later this year.

The reason is doubtless because Bin Hammam needs to know whether he can rally more than half of FIFA's 208 voting member associations to his cause. This remains a significant doubt after the recent election to a FIFA vice-presidential role of Jordan's Prince Ali, who is deemed to be worth around two dozen votes to Blatter from within Bin Hammam's own Asian fiefdom.

Last year was a mixed one for Blatter and FIFA. The organisational success of the World Cup in South Africa was compromised by the comparatively poor quality of the football itself and the lack of goals, while the ultimate cost of hosting the tournament irritated many South African analysts and the tourist "take" was well down on original projections, although this could be blamed on the global financial recession.

Later came all the controversies over the badly mishandled 2018 and 2022 World Cup decisions, enshrouded by the vote-rigging scandal which saw the suspensions of two FIFA exco members.

All that should have made Blatter vulnerable. But the power of presidential patronage remains immense.

For evidence, just consider the decision of Blatter's executive committee that each of FIFA's 200-plus member associations will this year receive a further one-off bonus payment of £185,000 through the financial assistance programme. For the six regional confederations, this bonus will amount to £1.5m each (and the ExCo is comprised of confederation representatives).

Last year each member association also received what was then considered a one-off development bonus of £150,000 while each confederation received £1.5m.

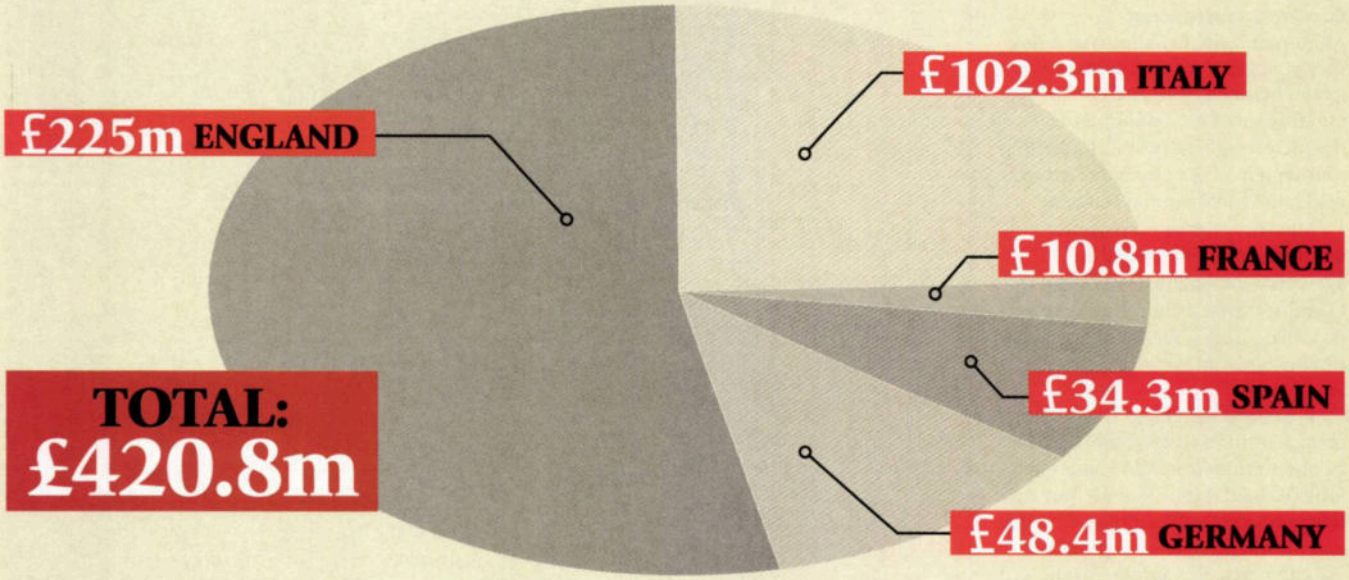
FIFA says the "second one-off" bonus has been made possible by the commercial success of the World Cup in South Africa, and funds should be invested in development programmes and FIFA competition participation.

Bin Hammam may have awoken suddenly, belatedly and opportunistically to FIFA's structural flaws but no one had noticed him pushing for change from within the ExCo over the last few years.

He will have to come up with solid proposals if – to repeat, if – he wants to persuade the nouveau re-enriched to his cause.

January transfer window

MONEY SPENT BY EUROPE'S BIG FIVE LEAGUES



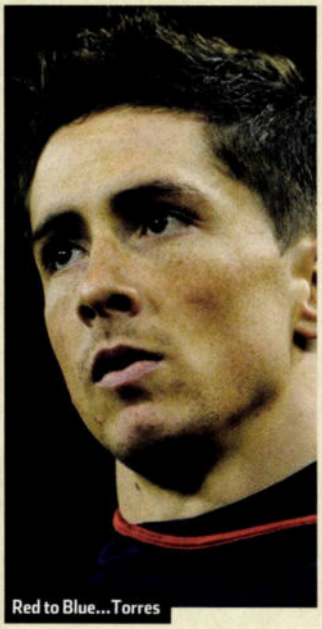
TOP TRANSFERS, BY COUNTRY

ENGLAND
Fernando Torres
Liverpool to Chelsea
£50m

UKRAINE
Giuliano
International (Bra) to Dnipro
£8.6m

RUSSIA
Senijad Ibricic
Hajduk Split (Cro) to Lokomotiv Moscow
£4.2m

BELGIUM
Jelle Van Damme
Wolverhapton W (Eng) to Standard Liege
£2.5m


Red to Blue...Torres

AUSTRIA
Douglas Da Silva
Hapoel Tel-Aviv (Isr) to Salzburg
£2.4m

GERMANY
Luiz Gustavo
Hoffenheim to Bayern Munich
£12m

SPAIN
Elias
Corinthians (Bra) to Atletico Madrid
£6m

FRANCE
Rod Fanni
Rennes to Marseille
£3.25m

POLAND
Rafal Murawski
Rubin Kazan (Rus) to Lech Poznan
£860,000

ITALY
Giampaolo Pazzini
Sampdoria to Internazionale
£11.2m

TURKEY
Bogdan Stancu
Steaua Bucharest (Rom) to Galatasaray
£4.75m

BRAZIL
Ronaldinho
Milan (Ita) to Flamengo
£3m

SCOTLAND
Kris Commons
Derby County (Eng) to Celtic
£300,000

– who spent what?

TOP 25 INDIVIDUAL DEALS

£50m
FERNANDO TORRES
Liverpool to Chelsea

£35m
ANDY CARROLL
Newcastle United to Liverpool

£27m
EDIN DZEKO
Wolfsburg to Manchester City

£25m
DAVID LUIZ
Benfica to Chelsea

£22.8m
LUIS SUAREZ
Ajax to Liverpool

£24m £18m (plus £6m add-ons)
DARREN BENT
Sunderland to Aston Villa

£12m
LUIZ GUSTAVO
Hoffenheim to Bayern Munich

£11.2m
Giampaolo Pazzini
Sampdoria Internazionale

£10.7m
Andrea Ranocchia
Genoa to Internazionale

£10.2m
Patrick Helmes
Bayer Leverkusen to Wolfsburg

£8.6m
Giuliano
International to Dnipro

£7.4m
Jonathan Cristaldo
Velez Sarsfield to Metalist

£6m
Ryan Babel
Liverpool to Hoffenheim
Elias
Corinthians to Atletico Madrid
Jean Makoun
Lyon to Aston Villa
Stephane Sessegnon Paris Saint-Germain to Sunderland

Inter buy...Pazzini

Leaving Leverkusen...Helmes

£5.75m
Hatem Ben Arfa Marseille to Newcastle United

£5m
Sebastian Blanco Lanus to Metalist
Samuel Inkoom Basle to Dnipro
Abdoulay Konko Sevilla to Genoa
Adil Rami Lille to Valencia (then loan back until July)
Victor Ruiz Espanyol to Napoli

£4.75m
Bogdan Stancu Steaua Bucharest to Galatasaray

£4.5m
Tuncay Sanli Stoke City to Wolfsburg

£4.2m
Senijad Ibricic Hajduk Split to Lokomotiv Moscow

BRAZIL P24
TURKEY P27
QATAR P28
RUSSIA P30
SAUDI ARABIA P31
SPAIN P32
TUNISIA P34
FRANCE P35
ITALY P36
GERMANY P38
UKRAINE P39
USA P40
PHILIPPINES P42

INDEX

Financial returns

A strong currency and keen sponsors have helped clubs bring stars back from Europe

BRAZIL

TIM VICKERY in Rio de Janeiro

EIGHT-AND-A-HALF years after Brazil's World Cup triumph in Japan and South Korea, the country's "3R" forward line are all back on home soil.

While Ronaldo has been deprived of the chance to lead Corinthians to Libertadores Cup glory (see *Headliners*, page 19) and Rivaldo has swapped his role of player-president at Mogi Mirim for a loan spell with Sao Paulo, it is Ronaldinho's arrival at Flamengo that is the most exciting.

The 30-year-old's move follows a similar pattern to Ronaldo's signing by Corinthians – and the spells of Adriano and Robinho with Flamengo and Santos respectively – in that the bulk of his wages will be paid by sponsors, but there is a key difference in his transfer which could prove to be a landmark for the Brazilian game.

The latter two deals were short-term loans of players looking for a brief refresher before heading back to Europe, while Ronaldo, having run out of road in Europe, found his injury record meant his likely options were either Brazil or retirement.

Ronaldinho, meanwhile, could have gone to England if he had wished but, after a decade away, going home was by far his preferred option.

One of the major justifications for his decision is an ambition to play in the 2014 World Cup. National coach Mano Menezes is conscious of the need to keep supporters onside for a tournament on home soil, and one of the easiest ways to do that is by selecting domestic-based players. The tournament is a long way off for a player whose levels of fitness and motivation have been in question for half a decade but, if Ronaldinho is serious, the size of Flamengo's support gives him an important constituency.

A more pragmatic reason for his return is financial. Brazil's currency is now very strong and the big clubs – and they don't come any bigger than Flamengo – have millions of supporters. Sponsoring a star name is an interesting venture for big companies and it has been reported that Ronaldinho will be paid in excess of £100,000 a week.

Complex process

Monetary considerations certainly seemed to be paramount in the square off for Ronaldinho's services between Flamengo, Palmeiras and Gremio. The deal would surely have been easier at the end of the European season, when the player would have become a free agent. As it was, he remained under contract with Milan, who therefore also had a voice in the negotiations, making the process more complex and expensive than it would have been had everyone waited until June.

Having both thought they had got their man at one stage, Gremio, his old club, and Palmeiras both eventually pulled out, scared off by the terms demanded by Ronaldinho's brother and representative, Roberto Assis, leaving Flamengo the last ones in the auction.

It could well be that the club's perseverance was at least partly rooted in desperation. National champions in 2009, last year was not kind to the Rio giants. Worse than being pulled into the relegation dogfight was the arrest of captain and goalkeeper Bruno on a murder charge.

Flamengo needed a PR boost and Ronaldinho certainly gave them that, with thousands of fans

Exclusive reports from our worldwide network of correspondents

Homecoming...the ticker tape is out for Ronaldinho as he is presented to Flamengo fans on his return to Brazil after a 10-year stint in Europe

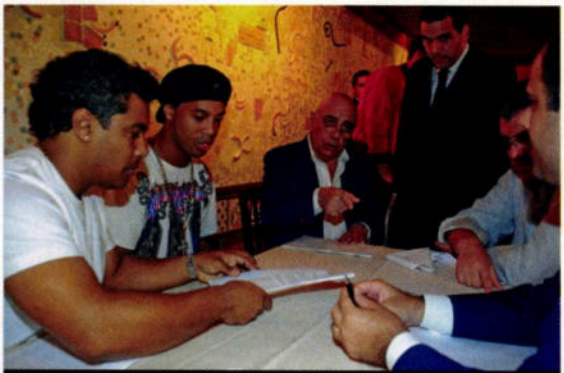
Sign of the times...Elano (centre) in action for Santos in a Sao Paulo state championship game against Mirassol, joined the exodus from Europe back to his homeland

turning out to greet the club's latest acquisition.

However, with Flamengo having failed to qualify for the Libertadores Cup, and the national championship not getting under way until the middle of May, for the first few months of his spell back home Ronaldinho will only be seen in the early stages of the Brazilian Cup and the Rio state championship, in which he will be up against clubs so tiny that they barely exist in a professional context.

Such a mismatch has sparked an unprecedented level of criticism of the state championships in the sports media and there is a growing realisation that taking part in these competitions is not in the best interests of the major clubs. The clamour for a more viable structure for the game in Brazil is only likely to grow.

> **"One spin-off of the Ronaldinho deal will be wage inflation"**



Sign here...(from left) Assis, Ronaldinho and Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani

Astronomical debts

One spin-off effect of the Ronaldinho deal will surely be wage inflation. Players based in Europe will up their salary demands to return, while home-grown starlets will do likewise to stay. Sponsors cannot cover everyone's wages and many of the top clubs, especially Flamengo, already have astronomical debts. These next few years are set to be a fascinating time in Brazilian football.

Ronaldinho's former *Selecao* team-mate Elano came home at the end of last year, rejoining Santos, while Mancini, last capped just over two years ago, has also made the return journey across the Atlantic to rejoin Atletico Mineiro.

Brazil's relative economic power in its own continent is also apparent, with Uruguay midfielder Egidio Arevalo joining Botafogo and his World Cup colleague Mauricio Victorino close to agreeing terms with Cruzeiro. A number of other South American nationals have also been snapped up by Brazilian clubs, with Internacional having taken Argentina centre-forward Fernando Cavenaghi on loan from Bordeaux for a year.

Inter, though, also supply evidence that the world has not been stood totally on its head.

Though the Porto Alegre club have not won the national title since 1979, they do have a claim to be the most successful Brazilian club of recent years. The reigning Libertadores holders have recorded the last two Brazilian wins in the competition, and they are the continent's most recent World Club champions.

However, they make no secret of their view that sound administration means producing potential stars for sale to Europe and, in January, the hero of the last Libertadores campaign, the highly promising Giuliano, was sold to Dnipro of Ukraine for £8.6million. ●

New stadium, old habits

Galatasaray's new home opened amid a storm of protest

TURKEY

MEHMET DEMIRCAN in Istanbul

THE SUPER LEAGUE in Turkey is shaping up for a thrilling second half of the season after third-place Fenerbahce's 2-0 victory over top-of-the-table Trabzonspor cut the difference between the two of them to four points.

However, events off the field have proved far more newsworthy since the turn of the year – notably the problems facing Galatasaray.

Down in 10th place and 17 points behind Trabzonspor, Galatasaray had hoped that the opening of their new stadium would provide a positive start to 2011. The new home, the Turk Telekom Arena, was the brainchild of former club president Ozhan Canaydin, who died last year.

Canaydin managed to get the new arena built without spending any club funds after striking a deal with the government-controlled housing corporation TOKI, who took over the site of the old Ali Sami Yen Stadium for development and built the new 53,000-seat ground near Istanbul's Trans-European Motorway.

Ali Sami Yen – famously nicknamed "Hell" – will be remembered as one of the most intimidating venues in the European game. However, its modern-era capacity of 22,800 was a stumbling block for the Istanbul club's lofty ambitions and a move to a new stadium offered a bright future – or so the directors thought.

Prime minister's speech

The Turk Telekom Arena was opened with a friendly against an Ajax side featuring Luis Suarez in one of his last appearances before he joined Liverpool. The opening ceremony was attended by numerous VIPs and government ministers, and the plan was for Turkey's prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to make a speech in which he would declare the new, government-backed stadium to be Galatasaray's reward for their success in European competition.

However, he never got to make his speech. TOKI president Erdogan Bayraktar inflamed Gala supporters in his address beforehand by suggesting that the government had bailed out the club from a "helpless situation". He called on the fans to thank the prime minister – who is a Fenerbahce supporter – for saving the day and his words sparked uproar as loud booing and hissing echoed round the arena.

> **"We will not allow those who protested against the prime minister into our new stadium"**
>
> *Gala president Adnan Polat*

The response of the prime minister was to walk out, along with the other VIPs, including Galatasaray president Adnan Polat, who said later: "We will review the police video footage and we will not allow those who protested against the prime minister into our new stadium."

Polat's words prompted a storm of criticism, while prime minister Erdogan's response did little to diffuse the crisis.

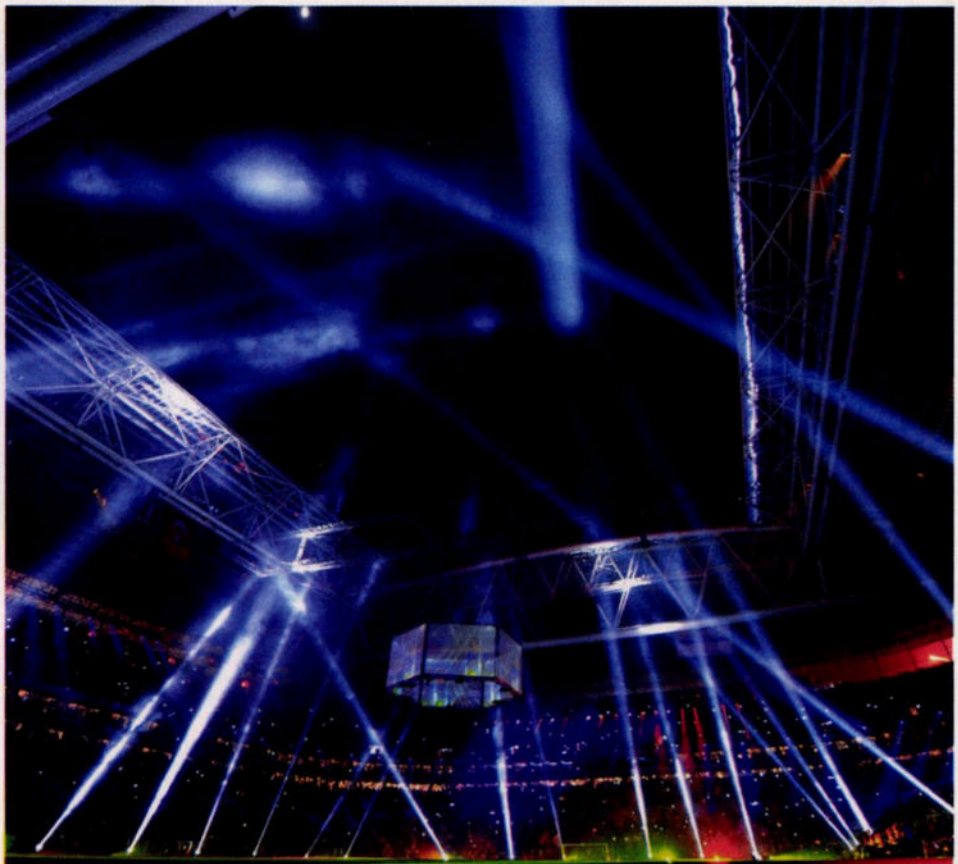
"Galatasaray did not spend a dime for the construction of the stadium," said Erdogan. "Our investments in the stadium totalled 600million Turkish lira [£235million]. We did not deserve such a protest."

Polat has so far seen off any attempts by disgruntled club members to unseat him, and insists that he is running the club along the right lines, but results on the pitch still leave a lot to be desired.

Two years ago Frank Rijkaard was brought in as coach, but he was sacked in October after a poor start to the current campaign. His replacement, Romanian icon Gheorghe Hagi, has fared little better, losing five of his first 11 games in charge.

Hagi's appointment followed the familiar pattern of recent seasons in which star names are signed, then dismissed, and then replaced by more star names.

Instability reigns at Galatasaray – and while they may have a new stadium, the old habits remain. ●



Light and dark...strobe lighting illuminates Galatasaray's new Turk Telekom Arena, but the opening ceremony did not go quite as planned

Desert storm

The 2011 Asian Cup in January highlighted Qatar's strengths – and also its weaknesses

QATAR

MICHAEL CHURCH in Doha

STANDING BESIDE the immaculate training pitches belonging to the ASPIRE Academy at any time after Qatar's successful bid for the 2022 World Cup finals, you would hear a familiar refrain.

"With money," many people visiting the capital, Doha, would say as they looked around a gleaming, newly built city, "everything is possible".

Qatar's hosting of the Asian Cup was never meant to be a barometer for the country's ability to hold the biggest event in the sport; the decision to award the continental competition to the Gulf nation was taken in 2007, long before the country decided to launch what seemed an unlikely bid for the World Cup.

But after FIFA's historic announcement in December that the tournament would come to the Middle East for the first time in 2022, the 16-team Asian Cup became a litmus test of Qatar's intentions.

Unfairly, everything was suddenly compared to the standards required for a World Cup that will take place more than a decade in the future in a land that has made significant strides over the past 10 years.

The Doha of today bears little, if any, resemblance to the way the city was at the turn of the millennium and, with plans and investment in place to develop the nation further ahead of 2022, Qatar's fitness to host the World Cup could never seriously be judged by how it fared at the 2011 Asian Cup.

Those who had flocked there early in the tournament hoping for scandal or signs that the Qataris would show an inability to handle the demands of a major tournament left disappointed midway through the first week.

With immaculate facilities, a cool climate that was perfect for sporting endeavour and all five venues within easy travelling distance of one another, there was little to find fault with as Qatar underlined its ability to meet the highest global standards.

Had the naysayers hung around until the Final, though, they would have witnessed the only major cracks that appeared in Doha's facade throughout the three weeks of the tournament.

Highlighting the sensitivity that was being felt over criticism about the lack of crowds throughout the tournament, thousands were locked out of the Final after employees from several local companies were promised free entry to the Khalifa Stadium.

The influx of fans – some of whom who did not have tickets but who were granted access upon showing their company ID cards – saw security officials lock gates into the stadium before the start of the final, leaving ticket-holding fans unable to access the venue.

Riot police confronted what turned out to be a crowd of more than 3,000 disgruntled fans but the threat of violence was avoided, perhaps in part because of the difficulty that exists in Qatar to purchase alcohol in public areas.

The fans outside were left to watch the game on television as Japan were crowned Asian champions for a record fourth time, defeating Australia, who were making their first appearance in the Final.

Power shift

The presence of Japan and Australia in the Final underlined the power shift that has appeared within the Asian game over the last 18 months and extended it even further.

All four semi-finalists – Japan defeated South Korea while Australia saw off Uzbekistan – were from outside the west of the continent, and it was the first time that no west Asian nation had progressed to the penultimate round of the competition.

That line-up largely replicated what was on show during Asia's qualifying tournament for the 2010 World Cup finals in South Africa, where Japan, South Korea and Australia were joined by North Korea.

West Asia's decline has been alarming, with Bahrain, who went closest to qualifying for the World Cup when they fell at the final hurdle to New Zealand, not even making it to the knockout stages in Qatar.

That result was only surpassed by the dismal showing of three-times champions Saudi Arabia, who lost all three games in their group. And there was to be no retelling of the fairy tale of 2007 as defending champions Iraq struggled with the weight of expectation and went out in the quarter-finals. Iran, hosts Qatar

Dominant forces...South Korea (in red) take on Australia in a half-empty stadium

and Jordan all exited the competition in the last eight.

Perhaps most worryingly for the teams in the western half of the continent is not just that they were soundly defeated by their eastern counterparts, but that it was done by teams featuring an abundance of young talent.

Japan brought a squad featuring an even mix of youth and experience, while South Korea – who played the best football of the tournament – fielded a side that excited and impressed despite its inexperience.

> **"Ticket holders were unable to get in after the gates were locked an hour before the start"**

All but one of South Korea's goals came from a player aged 21 or younger, but it was still not enough for Cho Kwang-rae and his team to end a 51-year Asian title drought.

However, there can be little doubt that South Korea will be among the favourites to claim the title for the first time since 1960 when the competition pitches up in Australia in four years' time. That tournament is unlikely to feature many of what remains of Australia's golden generation still calling themselves Socceroos in front of their own fans, and for the likes of Harry Kewell and Mark Schwarzer, the loss to Japan was particularly hard to take.

It was, perhaps, a final opportunity missed by a group of players who have done their utmost to lift the standard and stature of Australian football both at home and abroad. ●

More Asian Cup: Digest, page 96

Dutch courage

Holland's Euro 88 star Gullit takes over at top-flight club in war-torn Chechen capital

RUSSIA

VICTOR GUSEV in Moscow

PREMIER LEAGUE underdogs Terek Grozny caused a major pre-season sensation with their appointment of Ruud Gullit as coach. The Dutch icon was stunned by a surprise telephone call but had no hesitation in accepting the offer from the Chechen regional president, Ramzan Kadyrov, who inherited both the Russian Caucasian republic's leadership and the role of club president, from his father Akhmad, who was assassinated in 2004 during an official ceremony at the football stadium.

After his first training session, in the pouring rain in the Turkish town of Belek, the 48-year-old Gullit spoke of his ambitious plans for a club who are about to play only their fifth season of top-flight football. He said his aim was to finish in the top five and get the club into Europe, while also helping some of his players to win a place in Russia's national squad.

Gullit's predecessor, Anatoly Baidachny, built a side noted for an effective attacking game spearheaded by Argentinian Hector Bracamonte, one of the team's numerous foreigners. But Baidachny, the former Belarus national coach who had been a player with Dynamo Moscow in the 1970s, failed to construct a reliable defence – something which became even more evident when the club's Ukraine goalkeeper Andriy Dikan left for Spartak Moscow in the middle of the season – and Terek finished 12th in the 16-team Premier League.

A Russian Cup victory in 2004 – which happened a few weeks after Akhmad Kadyrov's death – remains the biggest success in the history of a club named after the mountain river and who are based in the quiet mineral springs resort town of Kislovodsk, 125 miles west of Grozny.

The players only go to the Chechen capital on match days – having returned there in 2007 after a 14-year absence – but, according to club officials, there are plans to bring the club back on a permanent basis, with the new 30,000-seat Ahmat Kadyrov arena due to open in March.

Getting to know you...Gullit runs the rule over Terek's Cameroon midfielder Guy Essame during his first training session

> "Gullit was stunned to get the call but had no hesitation in accepting Kadyrov's offer"

Popular Gullit

The club originally hired Spanish coach Victor Munoz to replace Baidachny, but the deal was cancelled after only a few days. The arrival of Gullit – who captained Holland against the Soviet Union in the Euro 88 Final and remains immensely popular in Russia, despite scoring the first goal in that 2-0 victory – is part of the local government's plan to show that life is coming back to normal in the region and that it is perfectly safe there, even for foreign celebrities.

Aptly named, the city of Grozny – which means "severe" in Russian – was almost ruined during two wars over the last 15 years which involved Russian federal-government troops and Chechen rebels.

Today the war is officially over, but separatist activities have not ceased in the area. Acts of terrorism are not uncommon and the threat emanating from the region is still there – with January's bomb blast at Domodedovo Airport in Moscow being a vivid reminder. ●

Position vacant

The Saudi federation is looking for a new national boss after sacking two coaches at the Asian Cup

SAUDI ARABIA

JAMES MONTAGUE in Riyadh

IN RETROSPECT, Jose Peseiro was always on borrowed time, but the manner and timing of his departure – even for employers renowned for a distinct lack of conscience – was still shockingly brutal.

The popularity of the former assistant coach to Carlos Queiroz at Real Madrid had hit rock bottom long before the start of this year's Asian Cup, but the Portuguese had somehow clung on to his job despite losing to Bahrain in a World Cup play-off in 2009.

It was an uncharacteristic moment of restraint by the Saudi Arabia Football Federation (SAFF), whose managerial revolving door had become something of a joke in world football.

"It is certainly not logical to sack the technical staff after each defeat," said SAFF president Prince Sultan bin Fahd after the defeat by Bahrain which meant 2010 was the first World Cup since Italia 90 not to feature Saudi Arabia.

However, fast forward to January 2011, and a 2-1 loss to Syria in the opening game of the Asian Cup was deemed unforgivable and Peseiro was sacked minutes after the final whistle.

That night, the country's state television showed haphazard footage, on a loop, of an incensed media pack filming every moment of his exit, from checking out of his hotel to supporters hurling abuse at him at the departure gate at Doha International Airport.

Humiliating

Ultimately the sacking made little difference to Saudi Arabia's Asian Cup hopes, with veteran Nasser Al Johar returning to take over the side and promptly losing to Jordan in the second game. As a result, Prince Sultan bin Fahd was then fired by the King of Saudi Arabia and, after a humiliating 5-0 thumping by Japan in their final game, Al Johar was also out of work.

Three games had ended in three defeats and with three sackings.

It's not hard to see what has gone wrong with Saudi football. Once the powerhouse of the Asian game, they are arguably now not even the best team in the Gulf.

A poisonous mixture of managerial short-termism, royal patronage coupled with unchecked power, and a cultural reluctance to allow the best players to leave the country has led to the Saudis, along with India, being the worst team at the Asian Cup.

"The culture of sacking managers at the first sign of difficulties...must be ended," said Ali Khaled in the Abu Dhabi-based *The National*, lamenting the poor performance of all the west Asian powers at the Asian Cup.

"Such short-term thinking will result in an unstable league and national team. The most talented young players must also be encouraged to perform in foreign leagues to gain invaluable experience."

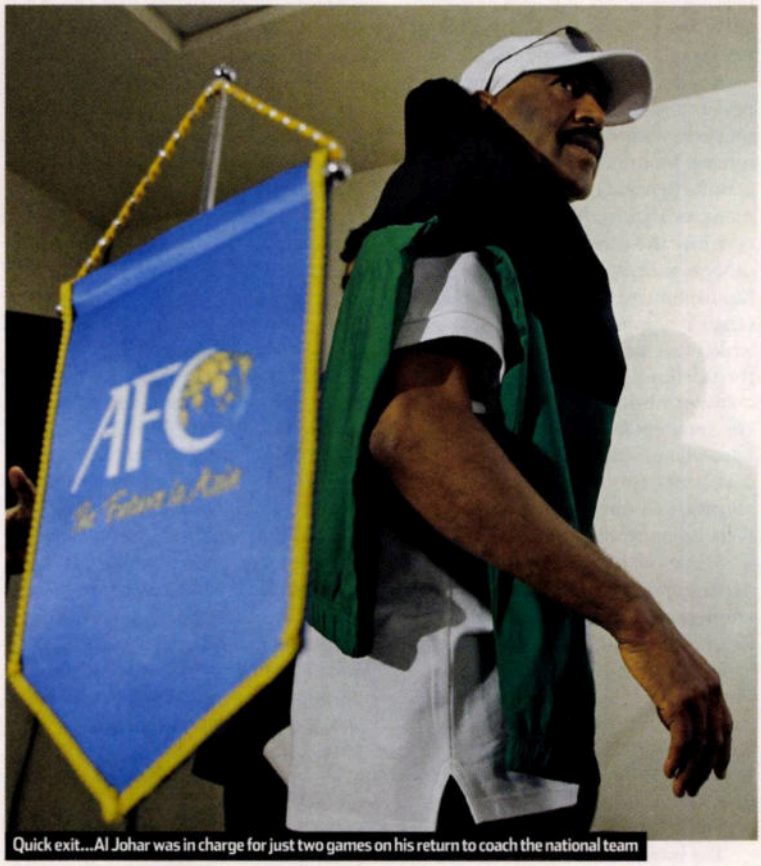
Not a single Arab (or Persian) team made it to the semi-finals in Qatar, proving that, while the money and the power may be shifting to west Asia – Qatar 2002, Sheikh Mansour's purchase of Manchester City, and Mohamed Bin Hammam's increasing power in both the AFC and FIFA being cases in points – on the pitch teams such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait (all of them former World Cup qualifiers) now come up short when facing the likes of South Korea, Japan and Australia.

While the Saudi Premier League produces teams that can compete at the very highest level of regional competition, it is east Asia that produces the players that learn their trade in the top European leagues.

"We vow to immediately replace them [Peseiro and his team] with a highly-qualified international crew and domestic aides," said the Saudi FA after the sackings.

But the question is: is there anyone crazy enough to take the job? ●

> **"It is not logical to sack the technical staff after each defeat"**
>
> *The SAFF president in 2009*



Quick exit...Al Johar was in charge for just two games on his return to coach the national team

Special delivery

Real Madrid signed the centre-forward that Jose Mourinho had been asking for, but the coach was not entirely satisfied

SPAIN

SID LOWE in Madrid

IT WAS JUST what he always wanted; certainly what he had been banging on and on about for months. Eventually Real Madrid were worn down, eventually they gave in, and, on Jose Mourinho's 48th birthday, it arrived.

They say the best things come in small packages but this parcel was huge: 6ft high and heavy. Inside was Manchester City striker Emmanuel Adebayor, signed on a six-month loan.

Mourinho had warned way back in the summer he needed another striker. A squad with countless players who could line up behind the No9 didn't have a No9 – certainly not the kind of No9 that Mourinho wanted. As he himself put it, the perfect striker would be a combination of Karim Benzema and Gonzalo Higuain. But not Karim Benzema or Gonzalo Higuain.

Besides, he said, two strikers were not enough. And what if one got injured? Madrid resisted; there was no money. Mourinho went for Higuain. Despite Benzema being the £30million marquee signing, he clearly did not convince the coach. Higuain, on the other hand, soon did. But then, as Mourinho had feared, it happened. Higuain was injured, a back problem which will mean a lengthy spell on the sidelines.

Mourinho stepped up his campaign. His apparent lack of confidence in Benzema was there for all to see – on a couple of occasions, despite the absence of a genuine alternative, the Frenchman was left on the bench.

Some saw that as a political decision more than a footballing one, another means of exerting pressure. Behind the scenes, he was continuing to insist. He had a point too; he had warned them, he was right. The squad was short in certain positions, and almost ludicrously long in others. Eventually, after countless battles both in private and in public, they agreed to sign a striker for six months.

The initial target was Ruud Van Nistelrooy. The Dutchman was keen to return to the Santiago Bernabeu and begged Hamburg to release him, but the German club – furious at what they saw as Madrid's arrogance in assuming they could take a vital player for free – resisted. Madrid were forced to admit defeat and so they turned their attention to Adebayor.

The Togo striker arrived at the Bernabeu with an option to buy at the end of the season. In principle, it is a right Madrid do not intend to exercise, but if Adebayor, a striker more in the Mourinho mould, impresses then that attitude could change – especially with Athletic Bilbao president Fernando Macua vowing not to let Fernando Llorente depart for Real in the summer.

Adebayor's opportunity

For Adebayor, it is an opportunity, even if Madrid do not decide to stick with him. "I am a footballer," he says. "And I want to play football." Having been out of action for most of the season in England, playing just eight Premier League games, he now has the chance to play in the Champions League and compete for the Spanish title.

"[Manchester City manager Roberto] Mancini lost faith in me," he adds. "After the last few months I am very happy to be here, to feel revitalised."

As for Mourinho, he was feeling vindicated but not entirely satisfied. If Madrid thought they had brought peace, they were wrong. More demands followed. Mourinho insisted on director general Jorge Valdano – theoretically his boss – not travelling with the team to away games and banned him from the dressing room.

The internal war continues and more battles are likely to come. When Adebayor's first game ended with Madrid being defeated by Osasuna and slipping seven points behind Barcelona, you wondered if, behind the scenes, Valdano might just be having the last laugh.

Adebayor was not the only signing made during the winter transfer window but he might as well have been. Not just because the saga of Madrid's search for a striker dominated the headlines, or even because the battle over his arrival was played out so publicly, but because there was so little else to get excited by in the winter window. Had it not been for Malaga there might have been nothing at all.

> **"Mancini lost faith in me. After the last few months I am very happy to be here, to feel revitalised"**
>
> *Emmanuel Adebayor*

Barcelona's one signing, Ibrahim Afellay from PSV for £2.5m, was made so early as to be virtually forgotten by the time deadline day came.

Only six signings were made on the final day. Giovani Dos Santos joined Racing Santander on loan as the new owners sought to get in reinforcements against the clock – they even requested special dispensation to sign Nikola Zigic, even though the window had shut. Elsewhere, Paolo Da Silva joined Zaragoza and Jefferson Montero signed up for six months at Levante, while Deportivo La Coruna were the day's surprise package, signing three players – and attacking ones, too – in Jose Sand, Javito and Xisco, despite their financial constraints.

In all, Spanish clubs spent £34.3m, and although that is an increase on last year it is inflated by the role of Malaga and reflects the financial woes facing the domestic game. Twelve clubs did not spend a single euro.

Atletico Madrid spent the most with a £9.5m outlay on Elias and Juanfran, while Sevilla spent £3m on Gary Medel from Boca Juniors and £1.3m on Ivan Rakitic. Valencia paid £1m for Jonas from Gremio in Brazil. Malaga apart, no one else brought in a player worth over £500,000.

Malaga, whose Qatari owners were the country's fifth-biggest spenders in the summer, acted fast as their team slid into the relegation zone. Coach Manuel Pellegrini, who had replaced the sacked Jesualdo Ferreira in November, was handed an almost entirely new side.

Martin Demichelis arrived from Bayern Munich for £2.5m, Julio Baptista cost £1.7m from Roma, Nacho Camacho left Atletico for £1.7m, Enzo Maresca came on a free transfer and Sergio Asenjo joined on loan from Atletico Madrid. ●

Gift wrapped...Emmanuel Adebayor poses for the media on his unveiling at the Bernabeu

Revolution in the air

Civil unrest brings football to a halt in troubled north African nation

TUNISIA

MARK GLEESON

A TOP-FLIGHT striker felled by a stray bullet, the suspension of the league and claims about the arrest of several prominent club bosses were the immediate effects on football of the first week of Tunisia's "people's revolution".

Club Africain's Amir Akrout underwent emergency surgery after being hit in the chest while on the balcony of his apartment watching a clash between rival security forces in the street below.

The incident occurred at the height of the protests which led to the rapid overthrow of Tunisia's authoritarian regime – which had placed great store in the success of its football teams. All-powerful president Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali had to flee, along with his much-despised second wife, Leila Trabelsi, whose relatives were alleged to have carved up the country's economy between them and who held an iron grip on everyday life.

Akrout, 27, who doctors have now declared out of danger, had a spell in the Bundesliga with Freiburg and played in Saudi Arabia for Al Wahda before returning to Tunisia in 2009.

Even more of a discussion point in the small north African country – that has long punched above its weight in football terms because of the enthusiastic backing of the Ben Ali regime – was the reported arrest of former FIFA executive committee member Slim Chiboub, which was loudly trumpeted on *Al Jazeera* but later turned out to be a case of mistaken identity.

Chiboub was married to one of Ben Ali's daughters – albeit from the deposed dictator's first marriage. He spent a four-year term on the FIFA ExCo and is a former president of all-conquering Esperance. He remains president of the country's Olympic committee and was fortunate to be in Dubai at the time of the revolution, which has seen the arrest of more than 30 members of Ben Ali's family.

Flames of hate...protesters burn pictures of deposed president Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali and his wife, Leila Trabelsi

Out of danger...Akrout

Chiboub rose to prominence as the organiser of the 1994 African Nations Cup finals. But he was widely detested for the way in which he manipulated the fortunes of Esperance. The Tunis-based club is infamous for using every trick in the book to sway results in its favour, and the Confederation of African Football (CAF) used to cringe at Chiboub's persistent attempts to influence refereeing appointments and constant sniping at decisions that did not go his club's way.

Esperance bleated so often that their own fans also came to believe there was a permanent conspiracy against them. When they were soundly beaten by TP Mazembe in last year's African Champions League Final it was portrayed as a massive plot against the Tunisian club and culminated in ugly insults directed at CAF president Issa Hayatou as he tried to hand the trophy to the Congolese side at the end of the second leg in Tunis in November.

Chiboub was elected to the FIFA executive at the congress in his hometown in 2004, but was ejected four years later when he showed little fight against Hani Abou Rida of Egypt and moved into the Olympic arena.

As the troubles broke out, Chiboub quickly worked the Tunisian media from Dubai to distance himself from his father-in-law. Among his claims was that he had had little to do with Ben Ali over the last decade and that he and his family had been kept out the inner sanctum by Trabelsi.

"I never got my hands dirty like the band of gangsters who surrounded the president," he claimed, despite extensive business interests in the banking, telecommunications and media sector. "All Tunisia knows that I have had no connection with the ousted president for 11 years."

Among those allegedly arrested were AS Marsa president Montasser Maherzi, who is married to Trabelsi's sister, and nephew Imed Trabelsi, a power-broker at Club Africain.

The Tunisian league has been suspended until the end of February. In the last game to be played, second-place Etoile Sahel beat leaders Esperance 5-1. Goals from Danilo Petrolli Bueno, Francileudo Dos Santos, Lasaad Jaziri, Aymen Abdennour and Yacouba Diarra gave the club from Sousse their biggest-ever win over their rivals and closed the gap between the two to one point. ●

Kombouare's capital gains

PSG coach has got the Parisian club's supporters enjoying their football once again

FRANCE

HOWARD JOHNSON in Paris

WHILE MOST of the attention this season has rightly been focused on the so-called minnows of Lille, Rennes and Brest, one of Ligue 1's traditional powerhouses are slowly but surely returning to a position of prominence.

It has been 17 years since Paris Saint-Germain last laid their hands on the championship, and along with bitter rivals Marseille they were forced to sit and watch as their traditional thunder was stolen comprehensively over the last decade as Lyon emerged as top dogs with a staggering run of seven consecutive titles between 2002 and 2008.

Marseille restored some semblance of order last season when returning prodigal son Didier Deschamps chalked up a first title for l'OM since 1992, but this only served to heighten PSG's inadequacies.

Despite a huge turnover of both players and coaches as they desperately searched for a winning formula, the last 10 years have seen the capital's only top professional club spending most of its time battling relegation, fighting a reputation for a huge hooligan element among its supporters and scrapping internally as various individuals and companies have battled for control.

Despite players of the calibre of George Weah, Nicolas Anelka, Leonardo and Ronaldinho wearing the shirt at one time or another, if trophies were handed out for providing object lessons in how not to do it, PSG would be more decorated than Barcelona.

A steady decline in fortunes culminated in their principal shareholder, French satellite channel Canal Plus, bailing out in June 2006. And when a PSG fan was shot by a French policeman trying to protect an Israeli supporter from a PSG hooligan mob after a European game against Hapoel Tel Aviv five months later there was plenty of soul-searching at a clearly destabilised club. When Alain Cayzac resigned as president in April 2008, four games before the end of the season, PSG were in the relegation zone. They survived – just – but coach Paul Le Guen, who had played for the club before enjoying managerial success with Lyon, didn't.

> **"Sessegnon demanded a move, claiming Kombouare insulted him in training... but the coach holds all the cards in this particular tête-à-tête"**

PSG turned to Antoine Kombouare, a 47-year-old erstwhile defender from New Caledonia who had also worn the club's blue and red between 1990 and 1995, earning the nickname "Golden Bonce" after heading two important goals during the 1992-93 UEFA Cup campaign.

Kombouare's combustible managerial style, while successfully keeping little Valenciennes in the French top flight, had led to a number of run-ins with referees and even opposition managers, but his passion for the game clearly appealed to the PSG directors, who recognised a need to instil some fire in the bellies of a group of players who had vastly underachieved, and they appointed him in June 2009.

To some observers, French Cup wins in 2004 and 2006, and a League Cup victory in 2008, might not sound too disastrous. But we are talking Paris Saint-Germain, a club with immensely high expectations.

Kombouare's results were nothing to write home about in his first six months in the hot seat. Slowly but surely, though, he remoulded the team in his own image and by the end of his first season in charge he had not only won the French Cup but also ensured Europa League qualification.

High fives...Hoarau (left), Nene and Kombouare celebrate against Marseille

Handling the pressure

Kombouare has also proved himself a coach who can handle the pressure-cooker atmosphere that exists at PSG, where both player and supporter power too often holds sway. His handling of Stephane Sessegnon is a case in point.

The former star turn of the team has a reputation for being a bit of an egotist and had been used only sparingly this campaign. Sessegnon predictably demanded a move, claiming Kombouare had insulted him in training, but the coach held all the cards in this particular tête-à-tête and the 26-year-old was sent on loan to Premier League club Sunderland.

Not only are PSG currently lying second in Ligue 1, four points behind Lille, but supporters who had become used to sterile, unexciting and – above all – losing football are now witnessing a swagger in their side that hasn't been seen in years.

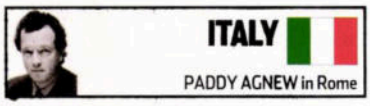
Having found a new hero in the Brazilian Nene (see *Six of the Best*, page 67), who arrived in the capital from Monaco last summer and has easily been the most exciting player in France this season, Kombouare usually opts for an attack-minded 4-4-2 with the tricky Mevlut Erdinc complementing the giant Guillaume Hoarau up front.

The supply line is provided by the evergreen Ludovic Giuly and Nene, while the defence has been marshalled superbly by Mamadou Sakho who, turning 21 in February, clearly has a huge future and has already worn the captain's armband, such is the esteem in which Kombouare holds him.

There is still work to be done, of course, and the coach is well aware of it. But in just 18 months Kombouare has restored pride, discipline, excitement and a winning mentality into a notoriously flaky team – and that is an impressive achievement at a club that has done precious little but lurch from one crisis to another in its recent past. ●

Foreign bodies

Roma could become the first Italian club to have non-Italian owners



IN 1986, Kenneth Whipple, the Ford motor-company executive who oversaw an ill-fated attempt to take over Italian car maker Alfa Romeo, said: "We were warned about going into Italy. We were warned we should look out or we'd get skinned."

In the end, Ford lost out to the "home-town advantages" of Italian auto giant FIAT, which still owns Alfa today. While Whipple never actually claimed that Ford had indeed been "skinned" during the aborted takeover attempt, there were plenty of others who came to exactly that conclusion.

The question of an American takeover of a valued piece of Italian socio-industrial jewellery has presented itself again with Compagnia Italpetroli SpA, the Sensi-family holding company which controls Serie A club Roma, beginning the formal process to sell the club. Debt-ridden Roma, who have been up for a sale essentially since a debt-for-equity swap with UniCredit Bank last year, attracted five binding offers: one American, one Italian, two Arab and one French.

Most commentators immediately identified three main candidates: a US consortium featuring Thomas DiBenedetto of Boston Red Sox and New England Sports Ventures (NESV), an Italian group led by health-clinic tycoon Angelo Angelucci, and Abu Dhabi's Aabar Investments fund.

Over the coming weeks, UniCredit, the Sensi family and advisor bank Rothschild are set to analyse the offers.

Media reports suggest that the DiBenedetto group – which has offered £100million to take control of Roma but which would leave UniCredit with a 40 per cent share – is in pole position, though NESV chairman Thomas Werner, whose company owns Liverpool, is on record as having said NESV is "not involved" and has "no interest" in purchasing the club.

If the DiBenedetto group does manage to buy out Roma, it will be succeeding where many before have not. Russian energy group Nafta Moskva (Roma), Hungarian-US financier George Soros (also Roma), Texan businessman Tim Barton (Bari) and Albanian petrol millionaire Rezart Taci (Bologna) are just some who have tried and – for different reasons – failed to buy Italian clubs in recent years.

There are many, however, who think that in these times of economic crisis a major foreign investment could be beneficial for Italian soccer. Current England manager and former Roma coach Fabio Capello told Italian radio: "For Roma to be run by Americans would be very important for Italian football. From what I've seen in England, the arrival of Arab and Russian investors has really helped English football grow. Financial resources are very important."

> **"For Roma to be run by Americans would be very important for Italian football. From what I've seen in England the arrival of Arab and Russian investors has really helped its football grow"**
>
> *Fabio Capello*

Declining status

If anyone had any doubts about the declining international status of Italian football, they had only to look at this year's FIFA Ballon D'Or awards. It was probably no surprise that not a single Italian player figured in the top 23 behind Lionel Messi, but the fact that only three of those – Wesley Sneijder, Samuel Eto'o and Maicon – play for Serie A clubs (all for Internazionale) says something about the current level of the Italian top division.

Italian commentators were outraged Sneijder finished only fourth and Inter's ace goalscorer of their all-conquering season, Argentina striker Diego Milito, did not even make the final nominations.

Even if Sneijder and Milito clearly merit much respect, Italian indignation might be better directed at the intrinsic problems of the domestic game, with cash-strapped clubs, a lack of youth-development policies, outdated and fan-unfriendly stadia, and hooliganism being the most obvious.

Despite the recession, the January transfer window was relatively buoyant, perhaps thanks to the fact nearly all the clubs ensured whatever they spent on a new player was already covered by the sale and/or loan of another. Inevitably, the big three – Inter, Milan and Juventus – made most waves.

Having already picked up Antonio Cassano from Sampdoria, Milan signed Dutch midfielders Urby Emanuelson from Ajax and Mark Van Bommel from Bayern Munich. Juventus moved for Genoa striker Luca Toni, Wolfsburg defender Andrea Barzagli and, at the very last moment, Cagliari striker Alessandro Matri. Inter finally moved in the market, too, acquiring defender Andrea Ranocchia and Moroccan midfielder Housinne Kharja from Genoa, and Cesena's Japanese defender Yuto Nagatomo. However, their purchase of Sampdoria striker Giampaolo Pazzini – for £11.2 million plus Frenchman Jonathan Biabiany – had the most immediate impact.

Signed in the final days of January, Pazzini quickly made his Inter debut in the second half of the home game with Palermo. Brought on by Brazilian coach Leonardo with his side 2-0 down, he turned the game around, scoring twice and winning a penalty, converted by Eto'o, for a thrilling 3-2 victory. Even if Inter might regret Pazzini being cup-tied for the Champions League, having already played in this season's tournament for Sampdoria, he could well become a key figure in what may yet become the great Inter fightback.

With only in-form Udinese able to stop Leonardo's winning run in his first eight games in charge, leaders Milan have more to fear from their cross-town rivals than any other team.

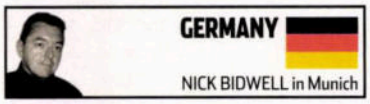
Inter, under Leonardo, have once more begun to look like the side that swept all before them last season. Stand by for a rare old Milanese tussle between now and May – with the second Milan derby, on the first weekend of April, already looking a key moment in the season.

Juventus, who are 13 points behind the leaders, have had a miserable 2011 so far. With games against both Inter and Milan to come, Juve could well be out of all important calculations by the beginning of March – a truly heretical thought for their once much-spoiled fans. But then again, a Roma club controlled by Americans also seems a heretical concept. Or is it? ●

For sale...(left to right) Roma's Francesco Totti, Marco Cassetti and Marco Borriello could soon be playing for American owners

Reality check

Hoffenheim's free-spending days are over says owner Hopp



GERMANY

NICK BIDWELL in Munich

PUSHED OVER the edge when Brazilian midfielder Luiz Gustavo was sold to Bayern Munich without his knowledge during the winter break, Ralf Rangnick's decision to walk away from the Hoffenheim coaching hot seat undeniably augurs ill for the south-western club's future.

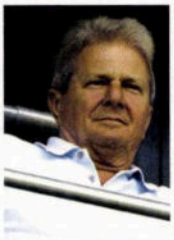
Hoffenheim may have lost the man who, after taking over in 2006, needed just two years to steer them from the third tier to the top flight and then turned them into a respectable Bundesliga force with seventh and 11th finishes, but even more alarming for supporters is the subtext to his departure: the drying up of the sugar-daddy funds which bankrolled this fascinating rags-to-riches story.

After pumping in £200million since 2006, billionaire backer and software tycoon Dietmar Hopp has suddenly become a fan of balanced books and is taking a leaf from the financial fair-play lexicon of UEFA chief Michel Platini. Hopp now insists that the operating losses of the last few seasons are a thing of the past. The once cash-rich upstarts have morphed into a selling club, offloading Gustavo, Brazilian playmaker Carlos Eduardo to Rubin Kazan for £14m last summer and Demba Ba to West Ham United in the recent transfer window for a fee that could reach £6m.

In autumn 2008, when Hoffenheim led the Bundesliga at the halfway point in their first campaign, Hopp's vision for a club he used to play up front for in the youth team knew no bounds. Shooting for the moon was the order of the day, and too bad if traditionalist critics lambasted them for their nouveau-riche ways and lack of footballing heritage.

But with the economic wheels now coming off, and ex-general manager Jan Schindelmeiser in the dock for allegedly handing out too many overly generous contracts to players, the gold rush has ground to a halt and Hopp seems content to count his blessings – such as Hoffenheim's elite status and the new Rhein-Neckar-Arena and training complex.

Better times...fans fly the flag at the inauguration match in Hoffenheim's Rhein-Neckar-Arena in 2009



In charge...Hopp

"Realistically the only goal we have is to be part of the Bundesliga," says 70-year-old Hopp. "The important issue is to remain in the top flight. Of course, I wouldn't refuse the title or a spot in the Champions League, but they are not our primary objectives."

Hoffenheim are not only on shaky ground financially; by downgrading their ambitions they will find it more difficult to attract the young and thrusting talent on which they have built success, while supporters could quickly become disaffected. Although not in immediate danger of demotion, they are on the slide and it may be harder to shift out of reverse than Hopp and his management team believe.

Certainly new coach Marco Pezzaiuoli has much to prove. Brought in as Rangnick's number two last summer, the 42-year-old has next to no experience in charge of a professional club: just a handful of games with lower-league Karlsruhe and Eintracht Trier. And while he did excellent work with several Germany youth squads, notably winning the European Under-17 title in 2009, there have to be legitimate questions as to his suitability at this level.

The one bright spot in the south-west is the remarkable form of Black Forest club Freiburg, who back in August were everybody's tip for relegation but now sit pretty in sixth place. What they lack in budget – at £12.8m, theirs is the smallest in the top flight – and big names, they more than compensate with coach Robin Dutt's tactical nous and the finishing of Senegal striker Papiss Cisse (see *Six of the Best*, page 66), who has scored over half their league goals this term.

Most unfashionable clubs would erect a statue in honour of the boss who, against all odds, had led them as high as second in the table – but not at Hannover, where general manager Jorg Schmadtke has not wasted an opportunity to minimise Mirko Slomka's part in the club's totally unexpected rise to prominence.

Slomka had, understandably, been in two minds about staying, but eventually signed a contract keeping him at the club until 2013, saying: "I'm staying out of a deep conviction. The team has developed fantastically and I want to build on that." ●

Dnipro raise the stakes

Big-spending clubs are threatening to break into the Champions League

UKRAINE

OLEG ZADERNOVSKY in Kiev

THE CURRENT domestic season in the Ukraine is proving one of the most competitive in recent years, with pundits and fans alike eagerly expecting the tightest finish in a decade...for the second Champions League spot.

While there is little doubt that Shakhtar Donetsk will retain their title, Dynamo Kyiv under pressure for the runners-up berth after Metalist Kharkiv, Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk and Karpaty Lviv all strengthened their squads during the transfer window.

All three chasing clubs are generously sponsored by billionaire owners and the most lavish spending this winter was by Dnipro's Ihor Kolomoyskyi, who owns four airlines, controlling 60 per cent of local flights.

In October last year, Kolomoyskyi recruited former Sevilla and Tottenham Hotspur coach Juande Ramos with the clear intention of reaching the Champions League.

Ramos hired an all-Spanish staff – two assistant trainers, Marcos Alvarez and Victor Munoz, and goalkeeping coach Pedro Jaro – and in the winter transfer window he spent around £17.5million; most of it going on Brazilian playmaker Giuliano, who was signed from Internacional.

The 20-year-old was voted the best player in last year's Libertadores Cup and he is under no illusions as to what is expected of him following his £8.6m move.

"I know that my new club is currently five points behind Dynamo Kyiv. But everybody at the club is dreaming about the Champions League next season," says Giuliano. "After some impressive signings, we will do our utmost to finish second in the championship.

"Next season we can even think about the title."

Ramos has ambitious plans for the club based in a city with close connections to the military and space enterprises, and which was completely closed to foreigners during the Soviet era. "Dnipro is as ambitious project because we have to break the monopoly of two local giants, Shakhtar and Dynamo Kyiv," says Ramos. "This winter I had nearly 40 days to strengthen our squad and make proper preparations for the spring part of the season.

"I think I failed at Tottenham, Real Madrid and CSKA Moscow because I did not have enough time to build strong sides in a very limited period of time."

Ramos believes that the forthcoming Euro 2012 finals in the country have made it much easier to attract players, adding: "The reality is that owners of the biggest Ukrainian clubs have enough money to buy quality foreign players.

"The fact that the biggest football event in Europe will be coming to Ukraine makes talks with quality players much easier."

Ramos can consider himself pleased with his work in the winter shutdown. He also bought in, from Braga in Portugal, Brazilian forward Matheus, who scored twice against Arsenal in the Champions League last November; the centre of defence will now be patrolled by Ghana's World Under-20 champion Samuel Inkoom, signed from Basle; Colombian Nelson Rivas was loaned from Internazionale; and Croatia international Ivan Strinic, who joined from Hajduk, offers reliability to the back four.

> **"The fact that the biggest football event in Europe will be coming to Ukraine makes talks with quality players much easier"**
>
> *Dnipro coach Juande Ramos*

Dnipro are currently in fourth spot and are three points behind Metalist, who are third.

Metalist also spent heavily in the transfer window, signing Argentinian midfielder Sebastian Blanco from Lanus and compatriot Jonatan Cristaldo from Velez Sarsfield. Cristaldo will replace naturalised Serbian forward Marko Devic, who decided not to sign a new contract and will as a free agent in summer.

The third Champions League contenders, Karpaty, picked up Macedonia international goalkeeper Martin Bogatinov, Slovenia Under-21 defender Gregor Balazic and forward Lucas from Spanish second-tier outfit Rayo Valecano.

Meanwhile, Shakhtar owner Rinat Akhmetov decided to ignore the transfer window and will give the players that won the 2009 UEFA Cup the chance to shine in the Champions League before letting some go to big western clubs in the summer.

Dynamo, who loaned Brazil international Andre to Bordeaux, had to be content with extending the contract of Croatia international Ognjen Vukojevic and the re-hiring of Russian coach Yuriy Semin.

Whether that will be enough to secure second place amid some intense competition this spring remains to be seen. ●

New arrivals...Dnipro's Giuliano (left) and Inkoom

Picture: fc dnipro

The Cosmos conundrum

A consortium of British businessmen want to revive the famous New York club

USA

PAUL GARDNER in New York

IT SOUNDS LIKE a great idea to bring back the New York Cosmos, but is it anything more than a flimsy romantic notion? After all, the name Cosmos means a lot more than just the football team; it brings back memories of celebrity glamour and high-living, and of New York at its most raffish. Can all that be recreated?

No, it cannot. Yet here we have a group of Brits who have bought the rights to the Cosmos name and are busy trying to build the new version of the club, from the grass roots up.

We have Terry Byrne, best known as David Beckham's favourite personal aide, along with former Liverpool CEO Rick Parry, former Tottenham Hotspur vice-chairman Paul Kemsley, and Carl Johnson, founder of New York marketing company Anomaly.

Four Brits – and, for me, that is where the major problems begin. Experience has shown me, time and again, any soccer venture involving Brits in the USA will quickly turn into an arrogant exercise of belittling American soccer and trying to import the British way of doing things.

I had thought the new Cosmos people might be doing things more sensibly. They started by forming working relationships with two excellent, established youth clubs, New York's Blau Weiss Gottschee and Los Angeles FC. Clearly some thought had gone into that, and Pele was soon signed up as the honorary president – a no-brainer for the man whose name is almost synonymous with the Cosmos – but where was all this going?

The "long-term goal", as Byrne explained in a long interview in *Sports Illustrated*, is to have the Cosmos part of Major League Soccer. This year, MLS expands to 18 teams and it is expected to add its 20th team in 2013. "We will do everything within our power to try to be that 20th team," says Byrne.

There is pretty widespread agreement, including opinion at MLS, that New York should have a second team. Some would argue that the Cosmos would be New York's only team, because the New York Red Bulls, operating and playing entirely in New Jersey, are misnamed.

Practical problem number one is there is no stadium. A new one will have to be built, presumably with a 25,000-30,000 capacity. Byrne insists the money is there, but also floats the idea the local Wilpon family – who own the New York Mets baseball team – would become partners and build the stadium. Maybe. The Wilpons have been talking to MLS for years without any sign of a stadium being built.

Problem number two concerns the team. Whatever else a reborn Cosmos team might be, it cannot possibly be the assembly of stars that played from 1977 to 1983. MLS regulations, particularly the strict salary cap, rule that out immediately.

This is where Byrne's ideas begin to sound more than slightly impractical. He envisages the Cosmos youth division developing players good enough for the first team. That is highly questionable, not least because if the kids are of high quality there is every likelihood they will be bought up by European clubs. That is the reality of the modern player market.

Inspiration games

Of course, nobody is going to notice the Cosmos because of their youth teams. But Byrne plans to organise – starting this year – a series of highly visible all-star exhibition matches. He is calling them "inspirational games" because he plans to feature some of the world's best players, with Cosmos youth players sprinkled among them.

But organising all-star games in 2011 is not going to be easy. The dates are greatly restricted by FIFA's international calendar, and why would clubs release their players when everyone is already complaining about too many games? There is also the certainty of costly insurance.

More likely would be an international friendly between two top teams – and you can be sure at least one of them would be English.

Then there is the appointment of Eric Cantona as director of soccer. Far from being the masterstroke Byrne and Co seem to imagine it to be, it is really the one that raises the biggest doubts and underlines, in a seriously disturbing way, the narrow-minded soccer view that Brits seem always to bring with them.

Launch...Pele (left) and Kemsley

Cantona means nothing in New York. He means a lot, evidently, to Byrne and his Brits because he was a big deal in England. The signing did, indeed, arouse interest in Europe. But so what? Is Cantona meant to be a figurehead? But why would the Cosmos need a figurehead when they already have Pele?

And what about Byrne's buddy Beckham, who is supposed to have the rights to purchase a new franchise at a bargain price (the current price is reported to be £50million)?

"Absolutely not," says Byrne. "We have not approached David to become involved in the Cosmos."

The new Cosmos, then, look like this at the moment: a New York office, no first-team players, no stadium, two youth teams and a stack of not necessarily practical plans.

But the romance of bringing back the Cosmos still sounds and feels like a good idea. If it happens it will be a different sort of Cosmos, though Byrne certainly has the right idea when he talks of them as representing "an exciting style of play".

The biggest obstacle will be the diehard Britishness of Byrne and his partners. In the *Sports Illustrated* article, Byrne's points of reference are overwhelmingly English and European. He mentions 15 European players but only three South Americans – indeed, he seems almost totally unaware that there is any such thing as South American football. When talking about England, he says "back home", an interesting lapse; he uses the word football 10 times, soccer only twice.

British bias of this intensity brutally exposes the British feeling that – at least as far as soccer is concerned – the USA is nothing more than England West. It will be enough to kill off any project in the USA. Unless Messrs Byrne, Kemsley, Parry and Johnson can find a way to greatly temper or totally alter their mindsets, the new Cosmos will, sadly, never be anything more than a romantic notion. ●

We want to be a part of it...director of football Eric Cantona trumpets the rebirth of the New York Cosmos on the massive American Eagle billboard in Times Square – but will the dream become reality?

Tweet FA

National coach is sacked via Twitter

STEVE MENARY

HAVING TAKEN the Philippines to the semi-finals of the ASEAN Football Federation (AFF) Cup for the first time, coach Simon McMenemy can feel hard done by to have been sacked. And to add insult to injury, he found out about his dismissal via a social-networking site.

The 33-year-old Englishman, whose previous job was as assistant manager at non-league Worthing, had been something of a surprise appointment in the first place last summer. He had played in Finland and the United States before returning to his homeland, where he coached Filipino internationals Phil and Simon Greatwich at another non-league club, Burgess Hill Town.

"They encouraged me to apply," says McMenemy, who was given the job and pitched in at the deep end in the Long Teng Cup, held in Taiwan in October. After losing 4-2 to Hong Kong, the Philippines drew 1-1 with the hosts and thrashed Macau 5-0, after which McMemeny's contract was extended to the 2010 AFF Cup.

His squad for the biennial regional championship ranged from locals to Fulham goalkeeper Neil Etheridge and the Younghusband brothers, James and Phil, who have both played for Chelsea's reserve team.

McMenemy recalls: "It was tricky from the word go as there were a lot of foreigners who had played at the highest levels, and locals who were very keen but inexperienced."

The Philippines qualified unbeaten for the AFF Cup finals in Indonesia and Vietnam in December, and in their second game they stunned the hosts and defending champions Vietnam, winning 2-0 with goals from Phil Younghusband and another of the Greatwich brothers, Chris.

Draws with Singapore and Myanmar took the Philippines into a two-legged semi-final with Indonesia.

Both legs were played in Indonesia and, even though the Philippines lost 1-0 on each occasion, McMemeny felt he had done enough to stay on. However, in January he was replaced by Michael Weiss, a German who had previously been coach of Rwanda Under-17s. The appointment was announced on national TV but McMenemy found out via Twitter.

No way through...Anton Del Rosario (left) and Robert Gier stop Indonesia's Cristian Gonzales in the AFF Cup

Dumped...McMenemy

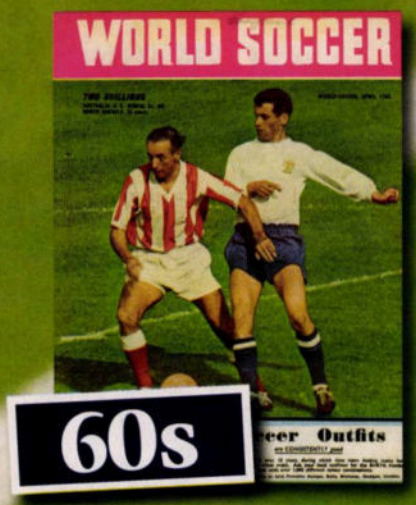
"There was a lot of investment on offer from the DFB [the German FA] provided a German coach was put in," reveals McMemeny. "Football has really taken off recently, and as a football decision I would have understood – if they had told me first."

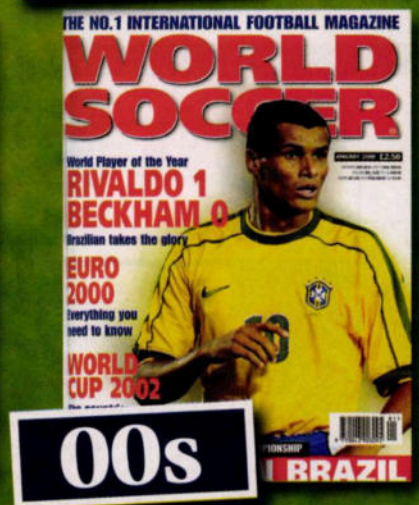
Dedicated enthusiasts

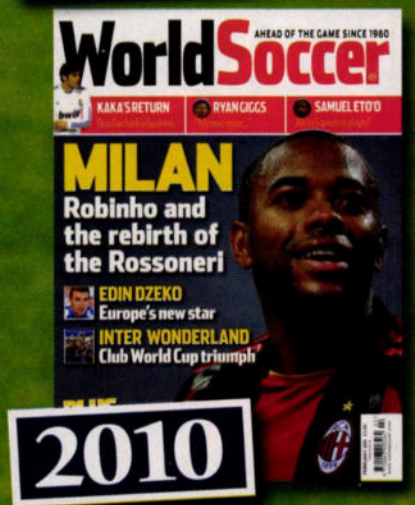
Germany-based players Mark Drinkuth of Agon Dusseldorf and Ingolstadt's Manual Ott play for the Philippines national side and the DFB are rumoured to have offered £425,000 to develop the game in a country that has no real grass-roots structure and relies on a handful of dedicated enthusiasts at the Philippines Football Federation (PFF). The DFB deny offering any financial investment so far and say they were approached by the PFF to find a new manager, with spokesman Markus Wiedner claiming: "We plan to provide a technical director to the PFF who possibly will be financed by funds of the German Foreign Office."

Although the Philippines does have a football history – Paulino Alcantara Riestra scored 357 goals in 357 games in Spain for Barcelona between 1912 and 1927 – the game remains in the shadow of basketball (there are two professional leagues) in the archipelago of 92-million people.

At present the country lacks a cohesive domestic football set-up. Iloilo in the Western Visayas region is a hotbed of the game but only teams from the capital Manila play in the "national" league. With DFB support, the PFF hopes to change all that – but while there could be benefits for Filipino players with German links, there may not be for others. ●







2011...

A new look for World Soccer next month

- New features
- New-look Dispatches section
- More analysis, more information

APRIL ISSUE ON SALE MARCH 11

WorldSoccer On the Web

THE LATEST NEWS...

THE STRONGEST VIEWS...

@worldsoccer.com

- Daily dispatches from *World Soccer* correspondents
- Brian Glanville's weekly column
- Editor Gavin Hamilton's blog
- Follow Gavin Hamilton on Twitter twitter.com/WorldSoccerEd

IT'S BACK!

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

17 PAGES OF TEAMS AND TACTICS

THE COUNTDOWN TO WEMBLEY

FIRST KNOCKOUT ROUND, FIRST LEGS

FEBRUARY 15
Milan (Ita) v Tottenham Hotspur (Eng)
Valencia (Spa) v Schalke (Ger)

FEBRUARY 16
Arsenal (Eng) v Barcelona (Spa)
Roma (Ita) v Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr)

FEBRUARY 22
Copenhagen (Den) v Chelsea (Eng)
Lyon (Fra) v Real Madrid (Spa)

FEBRUARY 23
Internazionale (Ita) v Bayern Munich (Ger)
Marseille (Fra) v Manchester United (Eng)

FIRST KNOCKOUT ROUND, SECOND LEGS

MARCH 8
Barcelona v Arsenal
Shakhtar Donetsk v Roma

MARCH 9
Schalke v Valencia
Tottenham Hotspur v Milan

MARCH 15
Bayern Munich v Internazionale
Manchester United v Marseille

MARCH 16
Chelsea v Copenhagen
Real Madrid v Lyon

QUARTER-FINAL/SEMI-FINALS DRAW
March 18

QUARTER-FINALS
First legs: April 5 & 6
Second legs: April 12 & 13

SEMI-FINALS
First legs: April 26 & 27
Second legs: May 3 & 4

FINAL
May 28, at Wembley

Arsenal

FIRST LEG FEBRUARY 16, 2011, ARSENAL v BARCELONA – EMIRATES STADIUM

Wanted...Fabregas

THE VIEW FROM ENGLAND

A REPEAT OF LAST SEASON'S tie was the worst possible draw for Arsenal fans but the best possible outcome for neutrals, who will saviour the prospect of, arguably, Europe's two best attacking teams locking horns.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger declined to join in the Premier League spending spree in the January window, even though inconsistent results in the group stage exposed the clear need for a dominant centre-back. Instead, he has attributed much of Arsenal's inconsistency to injuries to players such as Robin Van Persie and Thomas Vermaelen.

But he has also shown a worrying blind spot on goalkeepers, having persisted with the unconvincing Manuel Almunia for years. An injury to Lukasz Fabianski has now given an opportunity to another Polish keeper, the highly promising Wojciech Szczesny.

> **"Arsene Wenger has shown a worrying blindspot on goalkeepers"**

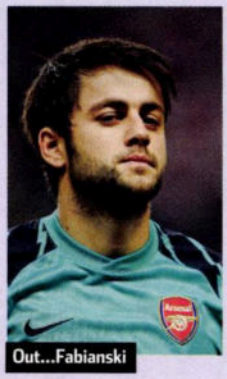
Further forward, Arsenal remain a delight, with Sami Nasri emerging this season and Marouane Chamakh offering a different option in attack.

The future of Cesc Fabregas, heavily linked with a move to Barcelona last year, will dominate the build-up to this tie. Arsenal insist their captain will not leave this summer, but a lack of silverware has proved frustrating for the Spaniard. Beating Barcelona would help persuade him to stay – but that will be asking a huge amount of a team which, although wonderful in attack, has a fragile centre.

Gavin Hamilton

SEASON SO FAR

● STILL CHASING FOUR TROPHIES
It is now five years since Arsene Wenger's side won any silverware, but this season they are still competing on four fronts: second to Manchester United in the Premier League, through to the League Cup Final and in the fifth round of the FA Cup, along with reaching the last 16 of the Champions League. Their Champions League performances have been inconsistent this term, especially the 2-0 defeat to Braga which meant they could only finish second in their group.


Out...Fabianski

● HITS
Cesc Fabregas is still the beating heart of this side and he has produced some match-winning performances this season. Sami Nasri has also confirmed his rich potential over the past six months.

● MISSES
Arsenal have problems in central defence and deciding on a first-choice goalkeeper. Also worrying is Andrei Arshavin's inability to reproduce the form of last season on a regular basis.

● JANUARY DEALS
None.

Big chance...Szczesny

● EMERGING TALENT
At just 20, goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny will be first-choice in the knockout stage due to injuries.

THE TACTICAL BATTLE

● PRESSING, NOT PASSING, IS ALL IMPORTANT
There's little doubt that this is the tie of the round, at least in aesthetic terms, but the problem for Arsenal is to prevent it becoming a procession. It very nearly did when the sides met last season, with only an improbable series of saves from Manuel Almunia preventing Barcelona having the game won within the first 20 minutes of the first leg at the Emirates. And with Pedro now a more mature player, and David Villa having replaced Zlatan Ibrahimovic, this is probably an even better Barca side.

Barcelona had held a two-goal lead in the first leg with two Ibrahimovic goals, both of which resulted from direct through balls. But they then seemed startled by the introduction of the pace of Theo Walcott, who pulled one back for the home side. Cesc Fabregas equalised with a penalty five minutes from

Barcelona

SECOND LEG MARCH 8, 2011, BARCELONA v ARSENAL – CAMP NOU

THE VIEW FROM SPAIN

THIS BARCELONA side have spent much of the past year providing ammunition for those that believe it is even better than the John Cruyff-led "Dream Team" from which it takes its inspiration. And what better way to prove that than by winning the Final at Wembley, the scene of the Dream Team's finest hour when they won the European Cup in 1992?

The way Barcelona are playing, some are asking if this might not be the best team in history. They have racked up a record 16 consecutive wins in La Liga and are scoring absurd amounts of goals, hitting five on eight occasions and even finding the net eight times in Almeria in November.

Six from the best...Messi

The draw has been kind, at least in theory, as there is an assumption that Arsenal's style of play suits Barcelona, with the English side opening up and playing, rather than "parking the bus".

But within the football club itself there is far greater respect than in the media, and coach Pep Guardiola says that he expects a stronger Arsenal side than the one Barcelona beat so impressively last year at the quarter-finals stage.

Of course, in a two-leg tie anything can happen, but it is not just a case of supporters hoping Barca make the Final; these fans expect it.

Sid Lowe

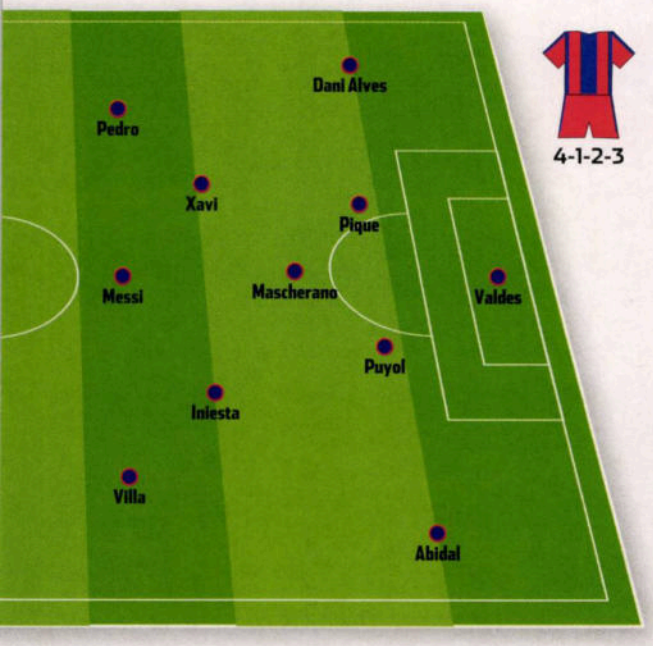
time, but missed the return with a fractured leg. Even with Walcott on from the start, Arsenal were well-beaten 4-1 at Camp Nou.

Given Barca's high defensive line, Walcott might again be Arsenal's best chance of success. What those two previous games demonstrated is that the major gulf between the sides is less in technique than in pressing.

When Barca squeezed it was in seemingly impenetrable layers; when Arsenal tried to regain possession, it was in dissociated pockets and the man with the ball could at least see space beyond his challengers. And that, of course, is why Arsenal were vulnerable to direct through balls: play a high line and press inefficiently, and even moderate passers can pick a side apart.

Barca, of course, are rather more than moderate passers.

Jonathan Wilson



4-1-2-3

SEASON SO FAR

● BEST EVER?
Qualification for the knockout stage of the Champions League was never in doubt as Barca came through a relatively easy group unbeaten. Their form in domestic and European competition has prompted many people to ask if the current side could become the best ever.

● HITS
Lionel Messi scored six goals in as many games in the group stage, while Xavi and Andres Iniesta continue to rival the Argentinian for the title of world's best player. Pedro has been vital this season, scoring in a record six successive La Liga games.

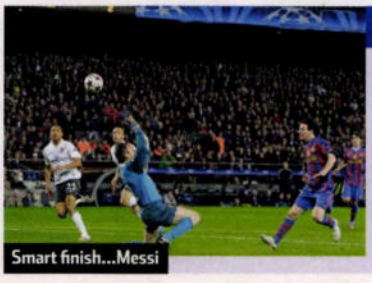
● MISSES
Occasional lapses of concentration have seen Barca caught out at times. With Carles Puyol and Gerard Pique defending a high line, they leave themselves open to direct counter-attacks – something Arsenal could very well exploit.

Defence...Pique (left) and Puyol

Impressive...Thiago

● JANUARY DEALS
Dutch midfielder Ibrahim Affeley was signed from PSV Eindhoven.

● EMERGING TALENT
Young midfielder Thiago Alcantara made an impressive debut in Barca's final group game against Rubin Kazan.


Smart finish...Messi

FLASHBACK

● APRIL 6, 2010, BARCELONA
Four sublime goals from Lionel Messi, including a first-half hat-trick, took the Champions League holders into the semi-finals for the third year running as they demolished Arsenal at Camp Nou. Arsenal had been hopeful after drawing the first leg 2-2 at the Emirates.

Copenhagen

FIRST LEG FEBRUARY 22, 2011, COPENHAGEN v CHELSEA – PARKEN STADION

Powerful...N'Doye

THE VIEW FROM DENMARK

THE UNKNOWN factor for Copenhagen as they prepare for the last-16 stage of the Champions League is how they will be affected by not playing a competitive match for two months due to the Danish winter break.

Will they be too rusty? Will they have the fresh legs to give Chelsea as much of a scare as they gave Barcelona in the group stage? Is intense warm-weather training in Spain any kind of substitute for week-in, week-out action?

On their form at the end of 2010 there is no doubt Copenhagen, on their day, could provide stiff opposition for the English champions as they were top of the Danish Superliga and unbeaten in their opening 19 games.

> **"A 1-1 draw at home to Barcelona illustrates Copenhagen's growing pedigree"**

A stirring 1-1 draw at home to Barcelona illustrated their growing pedigree. Brazilian midfielder Claudemir has been a revelation, Senegal striker Dame N'Doye is a powerful presence and then there is the renewed hunger of former Chelsea winger Jesper Gronkjaer.

But the nagging fear among Copenhagen supporters is that, however well-organised and motivated the team are under coach Stale Solbakken, they will be handicapped by lack of match practice.

Jim Holden

SEASON SO FAR

● DANISH FIRST
After beating Panathinaikos 3-1 in the last group game, Copenhagen became the first Danish club ever to reach the last 16 of the Champions League. They are also riding high in the Danish Superliga where they are heading for a third consecutive championship.

● JANUARY DEALS
Transfers in the mid-season break were restricted to loan moves and free deals. Midfielder Johan Absalonsen joined from OB Odense, while defender Jos Hooiveld arrived on loan from Celtic. Another defender, Pierre Bengtsson, arrived from Nordsjaelland. Striker Morten Nordstrand and midfielder Bryan Oviedo moved in the opposite direction, joining Nordsjaelland on loan.

● HITS
Chelsea old boy Jesper Gronkjaer will want to put in a good performance against his former employers. Dame N'Doye will be looking to improve his tally of three goals in Europe so far this season.

Left-back...Wendt

● MISSES
Though well organised, Mathias Jorgensen and Oscar Wendt could not contain Barcelona's Lionel Messi and they will need to stick tightly to Chelsea's Didier Drogba and Nicolas Anelka.

● EMERGING TALENT
Striker Kenneth Zohore, now 17, became the youngest Danish Superliga player at 16 years and 35 days when he came on as a sub against AGF last year.

Youngest ever...Zohore

THE TACTICAL BATTLE

● CHELSEA'S BREAKDOWN CHALLENGE
Stale Solbakken is a devout 4-4-2 man, using Dame N'Doye as his lead striker, with Jesper Gronkjaer – a winger in the days when he played for Chelsea – given licence to drift off him, often taking up wide positions and cutting in on the diagonal.

Copenhagen are more attack-minded in the Danish league, but in the group stage of the Champions League their two banks of four tended to sit deep, absorbing pressure. Against Barcelona, both at home and away, they achieved a happy balance: not playing so cautiously that they effectively became a punchbag for Barca's attacks, but offering a counter-attacking threat that earned them a draw against the Spanish champions in Denmark despite having only 36 per cent of possession. However, the threat Chelsea offer is rather

Chelsea

SECOND LEG MARCH 16 2011, CHELSEA v COPENHAGEN – STAMFORD BRIDGE

THE VIEW FROM ENGLAND

ROMAN ABRAMOVICH has not spoken publicly about Chelsea since he bought the club in 2004, but January's signing of Fernando Torres for a British record £50million gave the clearest signal yet that he has not given up on his ambition of winning Europe's top club prize.

Despite the millions pumped in, Abramovich's stewardship has not always been a smooth ride. The brutal sacking of loyal club servant Ray Wilkins as assistant manager last autumn – against the wishes of manager Carlo Ancelotti – coincided with a loss of form that has only recently been arrested. Meanwhile, Abramovich will hope that the arrival of Torres will galvanise an ageing Chelsea squad, whose key players are running out of opportunities to achieve some success in the Champions League.

Injury woes...Drogba (left) and Lampard

The form and fitness of Frank Lampard and Didier Drogba have been crucial to their progress in past competitions, but both have been troubled by injury this season.

Ancelotti must find a way to incorporate Torres into a formation that has been heavily reliant on Drogba for goals. Before Torres, Chelsea were confident of progressing past Copenhagen; with Torres, the stakes have been raised and Ancelotti is under pressure to deliver.

Gavin Hamilton

different and, given the relative lack of pace in the Chelsea side, Copenhagen's line will probably be a little higher.

The danger for Copenhagen comes less in players getting behind their back four than in Didier Drogba winning aerial balls in and around the box.

Often, when a 4-3-3 meets a 4-4-2 the key is whether the two central midfielders in the 4-4-2 can win enough possession to feed their wide men. Here, though, Copenhagen's four are likely to surrender possession and challenge Chelsea to break them down.

N'Doye, as a combative and mobile striker, meanwhile, may fancy his chances against a back four that has looked creaky at times this season, while Martin Vingaard offers a goal threat from the left wing.

Jonathan Wilson

SEASON SO FAR

● HIGH EXPECTATIONS
Despite a strong start, Chelsea have failed to live up to expectations so far this season. Having slipped out of the top four in the Premier League over Christmas, they are currently fourth, 10 points off the top spot. A six-game winless streak was ended just after Christmas with an unconvincing 1-0 win over Bolton Wanderers.

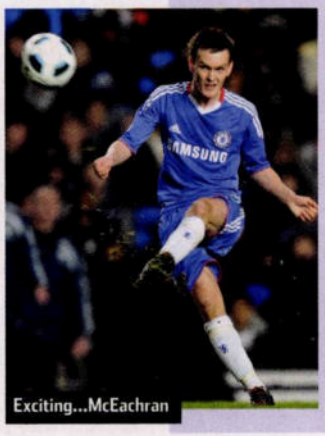
● HITS
It's no coincidence that the return of Frank Lampard has seen the team start to win again. The arrival of Fernando Torres, though hugely expensive, has reinvigorated the club.

● MISSES
The form of Didier Drogba has been erratic. Meanwhile, Brazilian midfielder Ramires has failed to impress so far and some believe that Ancelotti's insistence on starting with him is undermining the team.

Starter...Ramires

● JANUARY DEALS
Fernando Torres was not the only arrival. Brazilian defender David Luiz was signed for £25million from Benfica, but he is cup-tied for the Champions League.

● EMERGING TALENT
Midfielder Josh McEachran is the brightest English youngster to emerge from the Chelsea academy since John Terry.


Exciting...McEachran

FLASHBACK

Great Dane...Laudrup (second right) strikes

● November 5, 1998, Copenhagen
Chelsea won the second leg of the European Cup-winners Cup second round with a single goal from Denmark's Brian Laudrup. It was his only one for the London club in the final game of a brief stay before he returned to his homeland to join Copenhagen in 1999.

Internazionale

FIRST LEG FEBRUARY 23, 2011, INTERNAZIONALE v BAYERN MUNICH – SAN SIRO

No slacking off...Sneijder

THE VIEW FROM ITALY

WHEN THE December draw for the last 16 of the Champions League threw up a re-run of last season's Final, many people were immediately willing to forecast glorious revenge for Bayern Munich. For most of last autumn, Inter had looked a poor caricature of the side that Jose Mourinho guided to last season's historic Serie A/Italian Cup/Champions League treble.

Since then, however, much has changed. Firstly, Inter picked up another trophy, winning the Club World Cup against the not-exactly irresistible Congolese team TP Mazembe in Abu Dhabi. Secondly, Spanish coach Rafa Benitez has been replaced by former Milan coach Leonardo. Thirdly, under the Brazilian, the engines have started to fire on all cylinders again, with Inter winning seven of their first eight league and cup games in 2011.

With morale once again high in the camp and boosted not only by Leonardo but, arguably more importantly, the return from injury of players such as Julio Cesar, Lucio, Maicon, Thiago Motta and Diego Milito, the reigning champions may well deny Bayern their much desired revenge.

Paddy Agnew

SEASON SO FAR

● LEONARDO IMPACT
Expectations were high at the start of the season for the Serie A and Champions League holders. However, after several high profile defeats, Inter ended 2010 seventh in their domestic table and only qualified for the next stage in Europe as group runners-up. New boss Leonardo has won every game bar one since replacing Rafa Benitez.

Loss of form...Maicon

● HITS
Wesley Sneijder, so effective last season, is having another good campaign, though he has been injured of late. Samuel Eto'o has scored 25 in 30 games in all competitions.

● MISSES
Not many, but one of Leonardo's tasks will be to elevate the squad and help Maicon and Lucio discover previous solid form.

● JANUARY DEALS
Inter were the big Italian spenders in the window, shelling out more than £20million on striker Giampaolo Pazzini from Sampdoria and Genoa defender Andrea Ranocchia.

● EMERGING TALENT
Italy Under-19 defender Felice Natalino made his Serie A in November and then appeared as a sub in the Champions League against Werder Bremen a month later.

THE TACTICAL BATTLE

● INTER'S CENTRE V BAYERN'S FLANKS
There was much talk before last year's Final of the pupil facing the master, and to an extent Jose Mourinho did as the script said he was supposed to, asserting himself over Louis Van Gaal in Internazionale's comfortable 2-0 win.

Then again, Inter benefited in not having a central defender as disastrous under high balls as Martin Demichelis and in not being almost entirely reliant going forward on one player (Arjen Robben). Robben did get the better of Cristian Chivu on numerous occasions, but such was Inter's dominance elsewhere on the field that it hardly mattered.

Since then, both sides seem to have slipped back. Inter under Leonardo have abandoned the 4-2-3-1 favoured by Mourinho and Rafael Benitez, adopting the 4-3-1-2 so familiar in Serie A, with three relatively defensive

4-3-1-2

Bayern Munich

SECOND LEG MARCH 15, 2011, BAYERN MUNICH v INTERNAZIONALE – ALLIANZ ARENA

THE VIEW FROM GERMANY

NINE MONTHS after their 2-0 loss to Internazionale in the Champions League Final, players, coaches and management at Bayern make no secret of their intention to use the painful memories of that night in Madrid to put fire in their bellies for this rematch – and there is a strong feeling in Munich that a thirst for revenge will turn out to be the decisive factor against the *Nerazzurri*.

"Most of our team this season were on the losing side in May and, with the scars still fresh, we will have all the motivation we need," says former club goalkeeper Raimond Aumann, who was a key figure in Bayern's victory over Inter in the third round of the 1988-89 UEFA Cup.

Back among the goals...Gomez

Although Bayern have rarely hit the heights this term, many of the country's football pundits still believe they have every chance of progressing in Europe, optimism fuelled by the fact they play the second leg at home, the return to fitness of Arjen Robben after six months out and the rebirth of Mario Gomez who, after a mediocre first season in Bavaria, is now scoring with wild abandon.

Where are Bayern vulnerable? Look no further than the ever-deteriorating relationship between coach Louis Van Gaal and club officialdom in the shape of general manager Christian Nerlinger and president Uli Hoeness, which is an explosion just waiting to happen.

Nick Bidwell

midfielders behind a trequartista – either Dejan Stankovic or Wesley Sneijder – and an explosive front pairing of Diego Milito and Samuel Eto'o.

Bayern, meanwhile, have stuck with the 4-2-3-1 of last season, although the use of Bastian Schweinsteiger as the central member of the trident gives them a more defensive aspect than last year. If Franck Ribery and Robben are fit they have attacking options on both sides, along with Thomas Muller, who is yet to reproduce his international form at club level.

Essentially it's a battle of Inter's central strength against Bayern's flanks, and the usual issue of whether Bayern can win enough ball to feed their wide men – although here there is the added issue of Maicon looking to drive past Ribery to offer Inter attacking width on the right.

Jonathan Wilson

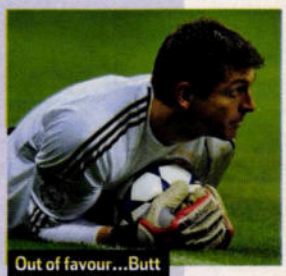
4-2-3-1

SEASON SO FAR

● RELIANT ON ROBBEN
Without the injured Arjen Robben, Bayern struggled to make an impact in the Bundesliga championship. They currently sit third, 14 points behind leaders Borussia Dortmund.

● JANUARY DEALS
Bayern signed Brazilian defensive midfielder Luiz Gustavo from Hoffenheim for £12million but let veteran Dutch midfielder Mark Van Bommel move on to Milan.

● HITS
Franck Ribery has vowed to make amends for what was a poor 12 months by his standards last year – both on and off the field. Meanwhile, Mario Gomez has hit six goals in six games in the current Champions League campaign.


Out of favour...Butt

● MISSES
Bayern have been giving goals away for free so far this season – and deploying Danijel Pranjic as a makeshift left-back has backfired on coach Louis Van Gaal. Having played half the season with Hans-Jorg Butt in goal, young Thomas Kraft is now his first choice between the posts.

Promotion...Kraft

● EMERGING TALENT
The decision of Van Gaal to drop veteran keeper Butt over the winter break in favour of homegrown 22-year-old Kraft has provoked quite a furore in Germany. However, the youngster certainly looks the real deal.

All over...Milito hails his second goal of the Final

FLASHBACK

● May 22, 2010, Madrid
Argentinian centre-forward Diego Milito scored both the goals in a highly anticipated Final in last year's competition. Internazionale had not won the trophy since 1965 and Jose Mourinho became only the third coach to win Europe's top prize with two clubs, having previously triumphed with Porto in 2004.

Lyon

FIRST LEG FEBRUARY 22 2011, LYON v REAL MADRID – STADE DE GERLAND

Two goals...Lisandro

THE VIEW FROM FRANCE

REAL MADRID WILL need no reminding that it was Claude Puel's outfit who knocked them out of the Champions League at the same stage last season. But what is perhaps more amazing is that the French team have not lost to Real in their six meetings in this competition.

"Lyon haven't had much luck with injuries this season and it took a while for the team to settle into a cohesive unit," says Laurent Campistron of *France Football*. "But they have enough talent at their disposal when things are going well to be contenders for the French title. Europe might well be a different matter, though."

On paper Real look far too strong for a Lyon side that has failed to gel this season. Despite the fact that Puel's team went on an unbeaten league run between September and January, performances have been patchy and no one is kidding themselves that the current side is as impressive as previous vintages.

"We're not consistent enough," admits Puel. "We've played really well at times in the Champions League, but then performed badly in our domestic competition."

The outcome of this encounter, then, will depend on which Lyon turns up for the two games. And not even Puel seems able to predict that.

Howard Johnson

> **"We're not consistent enough"**
>
> *Lyon coach Claude Puel*

SEASON SO FAR

● STUTTERING FORM
Seven points behind Lille at the top of the table, the Ligue 1 title is still within their grasp. Meanwhile, their Champions league form has been patchy, with a draw at home to Hapoel Tel Aviv enough to see them go through. Team morale should, however, have been boosted by the news that Swedish midfielder Kim Kallstrom has pledged to stay with the club.

Big investment...Gourcuff

● HITS
Lisandro Lopez has a history of scoring in the Champions League – and the club's record signing will be hoping to improve on his tally of just two goals in this season's competition so far.

● MISSES
Big-money arrival Yohann Gourcuff hasn't found anything like his best form since signing from Bordeaux. In defence, both Cris and Pape Diakhate have been exposed by quick, intelligent opponents, leaving the pair looking slow and ineffective at times in the group stage.

Industrious...Pied

● JANUARY DEALS
Defensive midfielder Jean Makoun was sold to Aston Villa for £6million.

● EMERGING TALENT
Jeremy Pied is a 22-year-old midfielder/winger who has made an impression with his work rate and his ability.

THE TACTICAL BATTLE

● REAL TEST FOR LYON'S DEFENCE
Jose Mourinho's lack of faith in striker Karim Benzema led him to field a 4-2-4-0 formation against Almeria in January, though in doing so he was probably making a point to his board rather than signalling a new tactical direction. By the time the Lyon game comes around, he should have returned to a more familiar 4-2-3-1, with either Kaka or Emmanuel Adebayor at the point of the attack, with Angel Di Maria, Mesut Ozil and Cristiano Ronaldo behind.

While at Manchester United, Ronaldo struggled to cope with the forward surges of the left-back Aly Cissokho when he played against Porto, but this time they look like being on opposite flanks, with Ronaldo up against the less

Real Madrid

SECOND LEG MARCH 16, 2011, REAL MADRID v LYON – SANTIAGO BERNABEU

THE VIEW FROM SPAIN

WHEN REAL MADRID were beaten 1-0 in La Liga by Osasuna at the end of January, many interpreted the defeat as the death-knell for their title chances – and that made the Champions League all the more significant. It was time, declared one newspaper, to go for the cups.

In truth, the European Cup was already Madrid's great obsession. And it was Jose Mourinho's success in the tournament – plus the fact that he beat Barcelona on route to victory last year – that made him such an attractive proposition.

Madrid consider the European Cup their competition, yet it is six years since they won a Champions League knockout tie. Although Lyon may seem a relatively easy opponent, they are a team Madrid have not beaten in six previous matches.

> "The European Cup was already Madrid's great obsession"

Madrid may have stumbled in La Liga of late, but optimism remains high in Europe – despite Mourinho's claim that his players are tired. While the coach may not be as expansive in style as some demand, in a two-legged tie few doubt he is extremely astute.

Most Spaniards do not see any genuine challengers from the rest of Europe and Madrid are tipped for the Final...if they don't get Barcelona first.

Sid Lowe

Vital...Alonso

aggressive Anthony Reveillere. Cissokho's individual battle with Di Maria, though, will be key.

Lyon have tended to play 4-2-3-1 in the league this season, withdrawing one of the three into a deeper role in Europe – as Man United did on their run to the Champions League Final two years ago. That means Jeremy Toulalan flanked by Kim Kallstrom and either Yoann Gourcuff or Miralem Pjanic, with a front three of Jimmy Briand, Lisandro Lopez and Michel Bastos. It is not a system set up for containment, as a record of nine goals conceded in their last three Champions League matches suggests. An open game seems probable.

Jonathan Wilson

4-2-3-1

SEASON SO FAR

● SECOND BEST
Jose Mourinho has galvanised Real Madrid into an organised and technically brilliant team. However, they are still in the shadow of their great rivals Barcelona and are seven points adrift of them in La Liga.

● HITS
Cristiano Ronaldo has scored a staggering 24 goals in La Liga this season. Meanwhile, Xabi Alonso remains a vital cog in midfield.

● MISSES
Gonzalo Higuain will be out of action for most of the rest of the season after he underwent a back operation last month.

Out...Higuain

● JANUARY DEALS
Madrid signed Emmanuel Adebayor from Manchester City after a deal to re-sign Ruud Van Nistelrooy from Hamburg fell through – much to the Dutch striker's annoyance.

● EMERGING TALENT
Sergio Canales is a 19-year-old attacking midfielder who joined the club from Racing Santander in the summer.

Summer buy...Cananles

FLASHBACK

● March 10, 2010, Madrid
A second-half goal from Miralem Pjanic sent Lyon through 2-1 on aggregate at this stage of the competition last season. Cristiano Ronaldo had opened the scoring in the sixth minute at the Bernabeu, but a strike from the Bosnia midfielder sealed the fate of Manuel Pellegrini's men.

Winner...Pjanic (centre)

Marseille

FIRST LEG FEBRUARY 23, 2011, MARSEILLE v MANCHESTER UNITED – STADE VELODROME

THE VIEW FROM FRANCE

DIDIER DESCHAMPS will be delighted simply to have led Marseille to the round of 16 after any number of failed European campaigns for the club in recent years. But the real work starts now – and the French champions will pull off one of the shocks of the competition if they can manage to knock out Manchester United.

Marseille's form has been patchy this season and Deschamps will be frustrated that his team have been unable to turn a large number of drawn domestic league matches into wins. With summer signings Loic Remy and Pierre-Andre Gignac up top, not to mention the big lump that is Brandao, Marseille should be tormenting opposition defences on a regular basis, but that hasn't happened often enough.

In Rod Fanni, Stephane Mbia, Souleymane Diawara and former United man Gabriel Heinze, however, Marseille do have a solid back line; perhaps not solid enough to keep United's stellar attack at bay over 180 minutes, but sufficiently well-organised to make sure this tie will be no walkover.

> **Deschamps still hasn't worked out what his ideal team is**
>
> *Ex-international Jean-Michel Larque*

"We're already in February and Didier Deschamps still hasn't worked out what his ideal team is this season," says former France international Jean-Michel Larque. "That's simply because the players he's put his confidence in haven't repaid that faith.

"I'd go as far as to say that most of them have been very average and the way they've been playing isn't good enough for the Champions League."

Howard Johnson

Creative...Lucho

SEASON SO FAR

● ALL TO PLAY FOR
The Ligue 1 holders are underperforming somewhat this season, but Deschamps' side still managed an impressive 1-0 win against Chelsea in the last game of the group stage and run riot against Zelina, scoring seven.

● HITS
Lucho Gonzalez is the main source of creativity in the team and has the ability to find a killer pass to unlock the opponents.

● MISSES
Despite scoring 10 goals in Ligue 1, Loic Remy has not shown his best in Europe this season. However, Marseille will need to be at their goalscoring best against the likes of Nemanja Vidic, Rio Ferdinand and their fellow countryman Patrice Evra.

More...Remy

● JANUARY DEALS
Defender Rod Fanni joined from Rennes for £3.25m.

● ONE TO WATCH
The brother of fellow Marseille player Andre and the son of former OM legend Abedi Pele, Jordan Ayew is said by his dad to already possess the same power and technique as Cristiano Ronaldo.

Praise...Ayew

THE TACTICAL BATTLE

● SHIFTING THE BATTLE TO THE FLANKS
Manchester United have tended to play 4-4-2 this season, combining Dimitar Berbatov with Wayne Rooney, but the home win over Arsenal in December probably suggested the way Alex Ferguson will go in the latter stages of the Champions League.

Since the 3-2 home defeat to Real Madrid in 2000, Ferguson has been uneasy about 4-4-2 in Europe, which probably means Rooney operating as a lone central striker, flanked by Nani and Park Ji-sung, and a deep-lying central midfield three of Michael Carrick, Darren Fletcher and either Anderson or Paul Scholes. The effect of that is often to make the centre a stalemate of attrition and shift the vital battles to the flanks.

Didier Deschamps is tactically flexible, but towards the end of the group

Manchester United

SECOND LEG MARCH 15, 2011, MANCHESTER UNITED v MARSEILLE – OLD TRAFFORD

THE VIEW FROM ENGLAND

UNITED HAD THE best defensive record in the group stage and conceded just one goal, in their final group game against Valencia, by which time they had already qualified for the knockout stage. However, the current side is by no means a vintage one.

With veterans Ryan Giggs and Paul Scholes in and out of the starting line-up, this remains very much a team in transition. That much was made clear in February, when Gary Neville announced his immediate retirement at the age of 36.

United have yet to recapture the excitement generated by Cristiano Ronaldo before this summer 2009 sale to Real Madrid, while Wayne Rooney has struggled with fitness for the past year. Nevertheless, there are encouraging signs that United will make progress in the Champions League knockout stage.

Consistent...Nani

Rooney is at last starting to rediscover his form, while Mexican striker Javier Hernandez has settled in quicker than expected, and Antonio Valencia, who suffered a nasty ankle injury in September, is set to return in March.

The issue of the Glazer family's controversial ownership of United is never far from the surface, although manager Alex Ferguson insists they have not restricted spending. He still feels that the current United squad are capable of reaching the Champions League Final on May 28. And he just may well be right.

Gavin Hamilton

stage, as Marseille's form improved, he settled on a 4-3-3 cum 4-5-1, which will mirror United's probable shape.

Assuming Marseille's midfield three of Fabrice Abriel, Leyti N'Diaye and Benoit Cheyrou cancels out United's three, the game is likely to be won on the flanks, where both sides support their wide men with attacking full-backs. The key is whether Rod Fanni can impose himself on Park and Patrice Evra, and whether Gabriel Heinze and Loic Remy get the better of Nani and Rafael.

Then again Deschamps may have something more specific in mind: in the group game away to Spartak, for instance, he shifted to a 4-2-3-1 so Mathieu Valbuena – who is struggling at present with a knee-ligament injury – could occupy their deep-lying playmaker Ibson, and was rewarded with a 3-0 win.

Jonathan Wilson

4-3-2-1

SEASON SO FAR

● BEATEN BUT STILL GOING STRONG
United have reproduced the old knack of winning while playing poorly to lead the Premier League, even though their 29-game unbeaten league run came to an end at bottom of the table Wolverhampton Wanderers. They were not unduly troubled in the group stages of the Champions League, although they scored just seven goals in their six games.

● HITS
Portuguese winger Nani has found a consistency this season that has been lacking in previous campaigns.

Back on song...Rooney

● MISSES
Wayne Rooney struggled for much of the autumn but after the controversy of his contract U-turn he looks to be returning to form. Injury-prone Rio Ferdinand may struggle to be fit for Marseille.

Staked his claim...Rafael

● JANUARY DEALS
None.

● EMERGING TALENT
The form of Brazilian right-back Rafael was a factor in forcing the retirement of Gary Neville.

Red tormentor...Gallas

FLASHBACK

● October 19, 1999, Marseille
Current Tottenham Hotspur defender William Gallas scored the only goal of the game when the two clubs met in France in the Champions League group stage match. Despite the result at the Stade Velodrome, United still topped the group with Marseille finishing second.

Milan

FIRST LEG FEBRUARY 15, 2011, MILAN v TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR – SAN SIRO

Goal machine...Ibrahimovic

THE VIEW FROM ITALY

IN THE BUILD-UP to this quarter-final tie, Milan players and staff will spend a lot time denying it but the reality is that they consider their draw with Premier League side Tottenham Hotspur a bit of a lucky break.

The mighty Milan might be out in front in Serie A, but this team seems some long way removed from the great Milan sides of the last two decades. Even if they have begun 2011 impressively, many suspect Milan were more than happy to avoid Manchester United, Barcelona and Chelsea.

The league leaders will be handicapped by not being able to use key January purchases – Antonio Cassano (Sampdoria), Mark Van Bommel (Bayern Munich) and Urby Emanuelson (Ajax) – given that all three have already played in this season's Champions League for their previous clubs.

> **"Milan have begun to resemble Inter with their reliance on the prowess of Ibrahimovic"**

To some extent, Massimiliano Allegri's Milan have begun to resemble Roberto Mancini's Internazionale in that they seem to have developed an immediate and heavy dependence on the goalscoring prowess of Zlatan Ibrahimovic. However, with "Ibra" in form, and Robinho and Pato beginning to look sharp, they could prove too strong for Spurs.

Paddy Agnew

SEASON SO FAR

● LUCKY OMEN
Although they made a slow start to the season, Milan led Serie A at the end of the year – and the last time that happened, in 2004, they won the title.

● HITS
Zlatan Ibrahimovic has answered his critics with four goals in six games in Europe this season. The former Barcelona man has flourished next to Robinho and Pato, while Gennaro Gattuso has enjoyed a resurgence in form.

● MISSES
The form of Massimo Ambrosini means Mathieu Flamini's time has been limited.

● JANUARY DEALS
While Ronaldinho returned to Brazil, there were a number of new arrivals. However, only young Spanish left-back Didac Vila, who joined from Espanyol, is not cup-tied for the Champions League.

Left out...Flamini

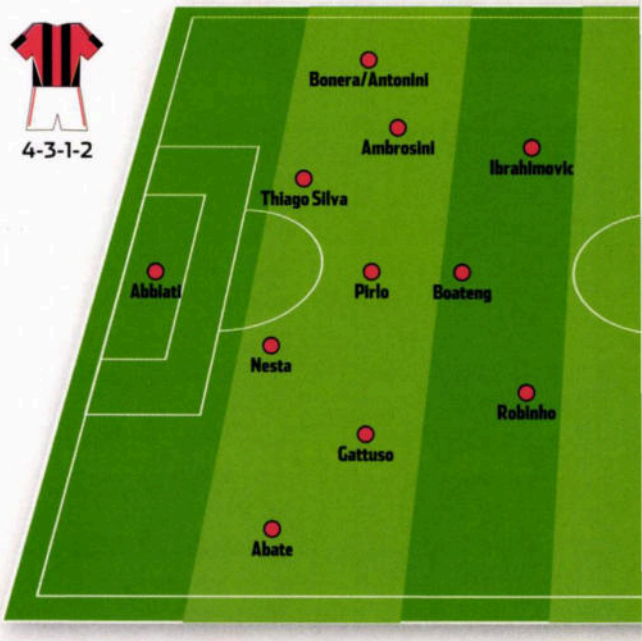
● EMERGING TALENT
Kazakhstan-born Germany Under-19 midfielder Alexander Merkel has broken through this term and played in serie A and the Champions League.

THE TACTICAL BATTLE

● WINGERS CAN CAUSE MILAN PROBLEMS
The bad news for Milan is that all three of their defeats in the first half of the season came against sides who play with attacking wide men: Cesena, Juventus and Roma (who lack natural wingers but had Jeremy Menez pulling wide). Their 4-3-1-2 can look very narrow at times and they are fortunate that much of the action in Serie A is concentrated in the middle.

Tottenham, by contrast, are arguably the finest exponents of wing play in Europe, with Gareth Bale and Aaron Lennon both having excellent seasons. Both are quick, which means Milan's two full-backs, Ignazio Abate and either Daniele Bonera or Luca Antonini, will have to be wary of pressing too far forward, which in turn may restrict Milan as an attacking force. On the other hand, a midfield three of Gennaro Gattuso, Andrea Pirlo and Massimo

4-3-1-2



Tottenham Hotspur

SECOND LEG MARCH 9, 2011, TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v MILAN – WHITE HART LANE

THE VIEW FROM ENGLAND

THE GROUP STAGE produced some thrilling nights at White Hart Lane, appreciated by fans enjoying their first appearance in the European Cup since 1961. Harry Redknapp's side were top scorers in the group phase, with 18 goals, but they kept a clean sheet only once. Whether Spurs' swashbuckling style will be as effective in the knockout round, when mistakes are punished, remains to be seen.

In the qualifying round, Spurs wobbled against Swiss champions Young Boys, conceding three goals in the first half of the first leg before roaring back to win 4-0 in the return.

Redknapp has earned a reputation as a wheeler-dealer in the transfer market and his £8million summer purchase of Rafael Van der Vaart from Real Madrid has helped turn Spurs into credible challengers to the elite. However, Redknapp failed with his principal targets in January. A striker was his main aim, but the need for a combative midfielder was arguably more urgent. Steven Pienaar arrived from Everton but is unlikely to dislodge Rafael Van der Vaart or Luka Modric.

The twin demands of the Champions League and Premier League will stretch Tottenham's resources in the spring, especially with domestic competition from Manchester City and a revived Liverpool for the fourth Champions League place. This spring may offer Spurs the best chance of European success for some time.

Gavin Hamilton

Welsh wonder...Bale has been in inspired form this season

Ambrosini may be able to dominate possession against Tottenham's central duo, presumably Luka Modric and either Tom Huddlestone or Wilson Palacios – particularly if the deeper lying of that pair is tied up with looking after Milan's *trequartista*, who is likely to be Kevin-Prince Boateng.

Rafael Van der Vaart, dropping off a striker can occupy one of them, but really that's when Tottenham's two attacking full-backs become crucial; if Alan Hutton and Benoit Assou-Ekotto can push down the flanks – and their defensive work is likely to be limited – they should be able to ensure Tottenham have enough bodies in midfield not to be overwhelmed in terms of possession. So long as that happens, then Spurs, a much quicker, more athletic team, possibly have the edge.

Jonathan Wilson

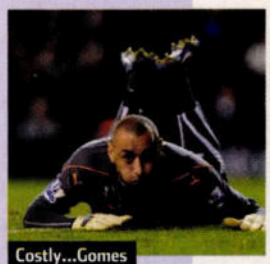
4-2-3-1

SEASON SO FAR

● HAPPY DAYS
It's been a very impressive Champions League debut season for Tottenham, topping their group ahead of holders Internazionale, who were well beaten at White Hart Lane. Domestically, they have lost just one at home in the league and are currently in fifth place, behind Chelsea on goal difference.

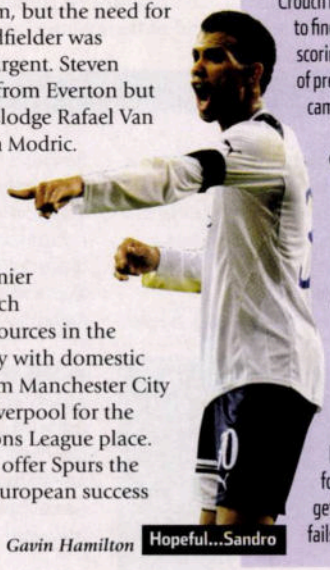
● HITS
Gareth Bale has been in blistering form, scoring a hat-trick against Internazionale in the 4-3 defeat in Milan and then humiliating Maicon in the 3-1 win in the return at White Hart Lane. The Welsh left-winger will threaten Milan's less-than-pacey defence with his speed and stamina. Luka Modric has impressed in midfield, linking well with Rafael Van der Vaart.

● MISSES
Heurelho Gomes in goal has cost his side at times this season, while Peter Crouch has failed to find the scoring form of previous campaigns.

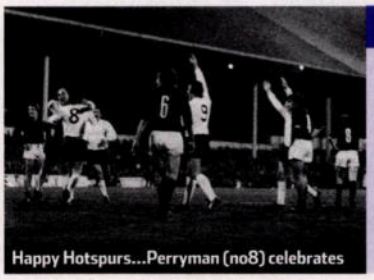

Costly...Gomes

● JANUARY DEALS
South Africa midfielder Steven Pienaar joined from Everton in a £3million deal, but manager Harry Redknapp missed out on Andy Carroll, Charlie Adam and Sergio Aguero.

● EMERGING TALENT
Brazil international Sandro, an £8million signing from Internacional last summer, has yet to force his way into the team, but could get opportunities if Tom Huddlestone fails to recover from injury.


Hopeful...Sandro

FLASHBACK


Happy Hotspurs...Perryman (no8) celebrates

● April 5, 1972, London
Steve Perryman scored both goals as Tottenham won 2-1 at White Hart Lane in the first leg of the UEFA Cup semi-final. A 1-1 draw in the San Siro sent Spurs through to the Final, where they beat fellow English side Wolverhampton Wanderers 3-2 on aggregate.

Roma

FIRST LEG FEBRUARY 16, 2011, ROMA v SHAKHTAR DONETSK – STADIO OLIMPICO

THE VIEW FROM ITALY

On target...Borriello

"LOOK, LET'S NOT be hypocritical about this. We're really pleased with this draw." Those words were spoken by Roma sports director Daniele Prade when Claudio Ranieri's team were paired with the team that everyone wanted, namely Shakhtar Donetsk.

Given the Ukrainians' relatively modest Champions League history, and that this tie comes towards the end of their winter break, Roma feel that the draw has been kind to them – which is just as well for there have been moments this season when the Italians have looked distinctly wobbly, their ageing warriors seemingly only held together by professional pride.

> "Roma have been paired with the team that everyone wanted"

Worse still, their outstanding centurion, 34-year-old Francesco Totti, has come in for criticism with various ungrateful subjects suggesting that maybe he should take a back seat.

Roma go into this tie in good form, but they would do well not to underestimate Mircea Lucescu's team and not to become distracted by the fact that this spring the club is destined for new ownership.

Paddy Agnew

SEASON SO FAR

● TINKERING WON'T HELP CONSISTENCY
Currently fifth in Serie A, nine points behind leaders Milan, Roma have struggled for consistency with Ranieri tinkering with the line-up. Impressive wins over Milan and Bayern Munich have been counter-balanced by defeats to Sampdoria and Palermo.

● HITS
Currently on a season-long loan from Milan, Marco Borriello has scored four times in the Champions league so far. His first goal started a remarkable comeback against Bayern Munich in group game that finished 3-2 to the Italians.

Looking to leave...Adriano

● MISSES
Adriano, who recently admitted that he will return to native Brazil in the summer, was awarded the Golden Bin Award by fans as Serie A's worst player.

● JANUARY DEALS
None.

● EMERGING TALENT
Rome-born right-sided 23-year-old Aleandro Rosic was a starter in the opening group game away to Bayern Munich.

THE TACTICAL BATTLE

● MIDFIELD SUPERIORITY THE KEY
The fashion in Serie A this season is very much for 4-3-1-2 and Roma's is more fluent than most. Jeremy Menez is far from a fixed point behind two forwards, and with a choice of Marco Borriello, Mirko Vucinic and Francesco Totti, their spearhead tends to the unorthodox.

However, it still seems a formation that can be predictable under pressure, with everything funnelled through the *trequartista* if the full-backs are unable to get forward to provide width. Marco Cassetti and John Arne Riise have provided that for the most part this season, but Italy is a land of little width.

Shakhtar with their 4-2-3-1, will test them in that area, but will themselves be tested by the challenge their two centre-backs face in having

Shakhtar Donetsk

SECOND LEG MARCH 8, 2011, SHAKHTAR DONETSK v ROMA – DONBASS ARENA

THE VIEW FROM UKRAINE

SHAKHTAR HAVE PREPARED for their meeting with Roma with cautious optimism as the memory of a 4-0 humiliation in Rome's Stadio Olimpico in the Champions League group stage in November 2006 is still fresh. The club has made considerable progress since then, however, culminating in their victory in the 2009 UEFA Cup Final.

"We definitely are not the same club that the Romans ruined completely in front of their fans four seasons ago," says captain Darijo Srna. "Our squad has been considerably strengthened since then and we have matured on our European travels."

The biggest factor counting against Shakhtar will be their lack of competitive action due to the winter shutdown in Ukraine.

Super sub...Eduardo

"The Pitmen" boast the youngest squad of all the Champions League contenders but such is their experience that the club felt no need to reinforce in the January window.

"Our starlets are very skilful and ambitious," says coach Mircea Lucescu. "They have learned how to play against strong European outfits without fear."

Unfortunately Shakhtar will be without combative defender Vasyl Kobin because of injury and there are doubts over the fitness of Taras Stepanenko and Fernandinho.

But Shakhtar owner Rinat Akhmetov remains confident, saying: "I'm very glad that Roma expressed their deep satisfaction with the draw. We will do everything possible to wipe the smile off their faces."

Oleg Zadernovsky

to deal with two centre-forwards, while the two midfielder anchors, who might have provided support, are engaged in countering Menez.

The key here seems the flanks. Mircea Lucescu had tended to play Douglas Costa on the right and Willian on the left, backed up by two attacking full-backs, Darijo Srna and Razvan Rat. Unless Roma's extra personnel in the middle allows them to dominate possession, or the two full-backs can press so high they effective neutralise two opponents each, Claudio Ranieri has a serious problem in dealing with Shakhtar's attacking width. The obvious ploy would be to shift the two outer players in the midfield trident wider to try to pen in the full-backs, but that sacrifices Roma's numerical superiority in midfield.

Jonathan Wilson

4-2-3-1

SEASON SO FAR

● UNCHARTERED TERRITORY
Shakhtar have reached the knockout stage for first time in their history after securing top spot in their group with a 2-0 win over Braga. They also managed an impressive 2-1 win over group favourites Arsenal. They currently sit 12 points clear at the top of the Ukrainian Premier League, but during the winter break they suffered heavy defeats in friendlies against Al Hilal (3-1) and Zilina (5-2).

● HITS
Brazil-born Croatia international Eduardo, purchased from Arsenal last summer, was Shakhtar's leading scorer in the group stages with three goals, but normally comes on from the bench.

Unhappy loans...Moreno

● MISSES
Bolivian striker Marcelo Moreno is back at the club after loan spells at Werder Bremen and Wigan Athletic failed to work out.

● JANUARY DEALS
None.

● EMERGING TALENT
Many hope that midfielder Taras Stepanenko will make a big impact at the Euro 2012 finals.

Impact...Stepanenko

FLASHBACK

Salvaged pride...Marica

● November 22, 2006, Rome
Ciprian Marica scored a 61st-minute winner for Shakhtar in the Ukraine as they avenged a 4-0 defeat in Roma earlier in the 2006-07 season. These two games represent the only time these two teams have met previously in the Champions League.

Valencia

FIRST LEG FEBRUARY 15, 2011, VALENCIA v SCHALKE – MESTALLA

Driving force...Mata

THE VIEW FROM SPAIN

SOMETIMES IT IS hard to avoid the conclusion that it is a good job that waving white hankies is a symbol of delight and disgust in Spain. That way, Valencia fans can just keep their handkerchiefs out all the time.

Valencia's hold on the fourth Champions League place in La Liga is a relatively strong one.

There have been some exceptional performances this season, but there have also been plenty of poor ones as well.

> **"Coach Emery is under pressure for being too defensive"**

Coach Unai Emery is under pressure from fans who accuse him of being too defensive, but it is in defence where most of the problems arise.

Against Manchester United, in the group stage, Valencia felt they were the better side at the Mestalla but lost; at Old Trafford, they got more than they deserved with a 1-1 draw.

Still, there is optimism that, with a kind draw, Valencia can reach the semi-finals if they get past Schalke. After all, no one expected them to reach the Final at the start of the decade and they got there twice.

Sid Lowe

SEASON SO FAR

● OFF THE PACE AT HOME
Despite some impressive performances in the Champions League, including a 6-1 demolition of Bursaspor, Valencia have not displayed any form in La Liga that suggests they can challenge the Madrid-Barcelona duoopoly, and they trail runaway leaders Barca by 17 points.

● HITS
Juan Mata has become the main creative influence following the departure of David Silva and his incisive play, driving in from the left-hand side, is a constant threat. He has also signed a contract extension to 2014, so he should be in a good state of mind.

● MISSES
Goalkeeper Cesar Sanchez should be back from injury, but he will need to recover match fitness fast to repel the striking prowess of Raul and Klaas-Jan Huntelaar.

Recovering...Sanchez

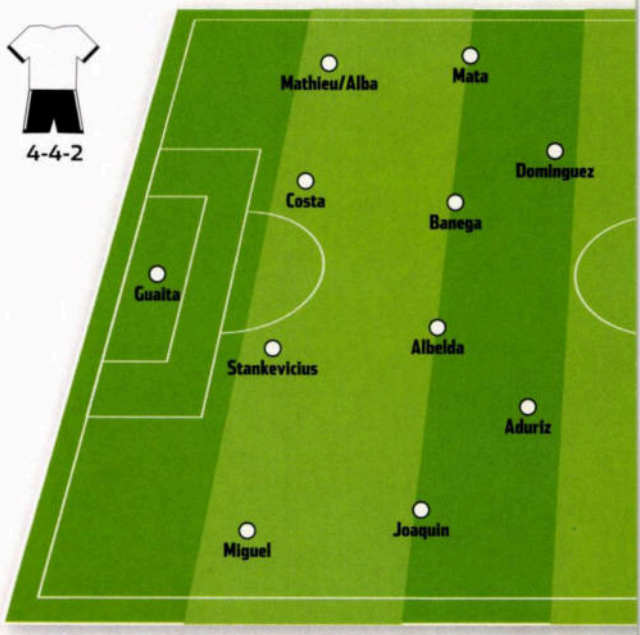
● JANUARY DEALS
Brazilian forward Jonas was signed from Gremio for a reported £1million. The 26-year-old was the leading scorer in Brazil's top flight last season with 23 goals.

● EMERGING TALENT
Spain Under-19 striker Isco only made his first-team debut in November, but he has appeared in two Champions League games since as a substitute.

THE TACTICAL BATTLE

● CAUTIOUS START LIKELY FOR SCHALKE
Schalke began the season with Jose Manuel Jurado playing behind a front two of Raul and Klaas-Jan Huntelaar, but poor results forced a rethink and Schalke have seemed far more secure in a 4-4-2 with Jurado on the left – if he is used at all as the preference may be for Edu – and Jefferson Farfan on the right. Raul then drops off Huntelaar, with Anthony Annan and Peer Kluge deep in midfield so the shape can at times resemble a 4-2-3-1.

Valencia are less predictable tactically, but whatever the shape their play tends to be based upon the central midfield axis of David Albelda and Ever Banega, who has been one of the real emerging talents in La Liga this season.



Schalke

SECOND LEG MARCH 9, 2011, SCHALKE v VALENCIA – VELTINS-ARENA

THE VIEW FROM GERMANY

MAKING PREDICTIONS about Schalke's chances of reaching the last-eight of the Champions League is not for the faint-hearted.

Combative and fully focused when topping their Champions League group last autumn, they were dazed, confused and disunited in so many Bundesliga fixtures, making the Gelsenkirchen outfit the archetypal dual-personality team – and it should be of no surprise that local opinion is more or less split 50-50 on the outcome against Valencia.

Those who are in confident in Schalke's ability to see off the Spanish side do so on three basic grounds: the team's excellent form in Europe this season, history (Schalke eliminated Valencia en route to winning the UEFA Cup in 1997) and the insider knowledge provided by their Iberian players Raul and Jose Manuel Jurado.

European focus...Farfan

The tie is widely presented in Germany as Raul versus Valencia, and the buzz in the press rooms is that the Champions League's leading all-time goalscorer is primed and ready for one highly fitting last hurrah.

On the opposite side of the argument, the naysayers are equally adamant that Schalke are heading for a heavy fall, claiming that drill-sergeant instincts of beleaguered coach Felix Magath – for whom no day goes by without rumours of the sack – are increasingly serving to alienate him from the squad.

Nick Bidwell

Aritz Aduriz leads the line, with Alejandro Dominguez, a mobile and occasionally brilliant presence, linking to midfield. The question then is who occupies the wide positions. Unai Emery could go attacking and select Juan Mata and Joaquin, perhaps even Vicente, or he could be more cautious and opt for one or both of Pablo Hernandez and Jordi Alba, both of whom can also play at full-back and would offer more energetic, industrious alternatives.

In a sense Magath has the easier task for he can play cautiously at the Mestalla and see how Valencia come out, adjusting his tactics according to the scoreline for the home leg.

Jonathan Wilson

4-4-2

SEASON SO FAR

● MIDDLING PERFORMANCES
After making some ambitious signings last summer, such as Raul and Christoph Metzelder from Real Madrid and Klaas-Jan Huntelaar, Schalke have failed to live up to expectations. They languish in mid-table in the Bundesliga, but their contrasting performances in Europe saw them top the group with a fine 3-0 win over Lyon.

● JANUARY DEALS
Ghana midfielder Anthony Annan joined from Rosenborg for a reported fee of £1.7million as a direct replacement for Ivan Rakitic, who left for Sevilla.

● HITS
Jefferson Farfan has been one of the few Schalke players who has been able to impress this season. He previously scored against Benfica and Lyon, and will be looking to add to his tally in the knockout stages.

On a high...Draxler is carried by Schalke team-mate Kyriakos Papadopoulos

● MISSES
Rumours continue about the future of goalkeeper Manuel Neuer – and that might have a destabilising effect on the Schalke captain, especially with Bayern Munich sniffing around. Farfan is reported to be keen on moving on after falling out with the club.

In demand...Neuer

● EMERGING TALENT
Seventeen-year-old attacking midfielder Julian Draxler came off the bench in only his second appearance to score the extra-time winner against Nurnberg in the quarter-finals of the German Cup. An under-19 international.

FLASHBACK

Not enough...Villa (right)

● November 28, 2007, VALENCIA
Not even a strikeforce of David Villa and Fernando Morientes could break the deadlock in this final group game at Mestalla. A young Mesut Ozil was in the Germans' line-up as they progressed through as group leaders while Valencia finished bottom and went out.

All to play for

Nick Bidwell previews the leading ties from the "Round of 32" in UEFA's second competition

ANDERLECHT v AJAX
BATTLE OF THE BENELUX POWERS

THE BENELUX powerhouses, each one a past winner of the old UEFA Cup, have little else in common these days.

On course to defend their Belgian league title, Anderlecht are confident and stable, strong enough to resist recent transfer window bids from Chelsea and Stuttgart for teenage striker Romelu Lukaku and creator-in-chief Mbark Boussoufa. Ajax, meanwhile, are in a total state of flux, forced to contend with cash-flow problems – last term they made a loss of £19million – loss of focus, a mid-term change of coach (Frank De Boer for Martin Jol) and the recent sale of two of their most influential players, midfielder Urby Emanuelson to Milan and striker Luis Suarez to Liverpool.

Anderlecht had the edge when the pair met in last season's Europa League, winning 3-1 in Amsterdam and drawing 1-1 at home.

New man at Ajax...De Boer

Glittering prize... the UEFA Cup is now the Europa League

Wanted man...Anderlecht starlet Romelu Lukaku

1ST LEGS - February 17
(except Aris-Man City, Feb 15)

2ND LEGS - February 24
(except CSKA-PAOK, Feb 22; Porto-Sevilla, Feb 23)

Front two...Benfica pair Cardozo and Saviola

BENFICA v STUTTGART
PORTUGUESE SALVAGE MISSION

WITH BENFICA lagging behind Porto in the Portuguese championship race, failing to make progress in the Champions League and unable to prevent the winter sale to Chelsea of highly rated central defender David Luiz, this season has, on the whole, been one of immense disappointment for the Eagles.

But as their recent 2-0 win at Porto in the first-leg of the Portuguese Cup semi-final proved, they are not exactly on the mortuary slab either.

Oscar Cardozo and Javier Saviola make for a fearsome front-two; in Javi Garcia, Nicolas Gaitan and Eduardo Salvio they have an excellent midfield; and Brazilian defender Sidnei looks a more than decent replacement for David Luiz.

Changes... Stuttgart coach Bruno Labbadia

Down among the Bundesliga condemned at the winter break, Stuttgart are blowing hot and cold, but do seem fitter and more unified under new coach Bruno Labbadia.

LILLE v PSV EINDHOVEN
MEETING OF THE LEAGUE PACESETTERS

THEIR SELF-BELIEF boosted by their position as Ligue 1 pacesetters, Lille are playing some of the most attractive and enterprising football in Europe at the moment and coach Rudi Garcia deserves the utmost praise for his total commitment to all-out attack.

Their strong point is the three flashing blades in attack – Gervinho and Eden Hazard out wide and the ever-improving Moussa Sow through the middle – and an industrious and explosive midfield featuring Rio Mavuba, Florent Balmont and Yohan Cabaye.

Although very competitive in the Eredivisie this term, the mood at PSV is gloomy. Two years without Champions League football has seriously weakened their finances, top midfielder Ibrahim Afellay left for Barcelona and talented Brazilian forward Jonathan Reis is out with damaged ligaments. Much will depend on Ola Toivonen and Balasz Dzsudzsak staying among the goals.

Goal threat...PSV striker Ola Toivonen

Much improved...Lille forward Moussa Sow

Free-scoring threat...Napoli's Edinson Cavani

NAPOLI v VILLARREAL
INTRIGUING CLASH OF STYLES

NAPOLI'S emergence this season as Serie A title challengers has been built to a large extent on world-class ability in the attacking third of Marek Hamsik, Ezequiel Lavezzi and the free-scoring Ururguyan Edinson Cavani. And if the Sky Blues are to prevail in this evenly-matched tie, their "Golden Triangle" must deliver.

Napoli's attititude has to be exemplary, however. In the Europa League, Walter Mazzari's side have made a habit of only switching on when they absolutely need to, combining sloppy defensive work – they conceded three goals in three different group games – with late winners and equalisers.

Should the Italians not be psychologically at the races, Villarreal have a variety of weapons to punish them, especially Santi Cazorla on the wing, midfielder Cani – who recently scored from the half-way line against Osasuna – and Italian marksman Giuseppe Rossi, their leading scorer in both La Liga and the Europa League.

Less resilient squads than Villarreal would have folded under the weight of their injuries this season – Nilmar, Marcos Senna, Marchena and Angel – but the "Yellow Submarine" keeps ploughing on, silently heading to a Champions League port.

Leading marksman...Villarreal striker Rossi

SEVILLA v PORTO
IBERIAN SHOWDOWN

SEVILLA have found consistency extremely hard to come by this season, but there have been unmistakeable signs of late that coach Gregorio Manzano has discovered a cure for the Andalucians' Jekyll and Hyde persona.

Returning star...Sevilla winger Jesus Navas

The return from injury of star wide man Jesus Navas has given the *Rojiblancos* another dimension. Alvaro Negredo, Luis Fabiano and Frederic Kanoute have started to look sharp up front once again and the whole squad was was lifted when defender Sergio Sanchez reappeared in the first team after a long lay-off with heart trouble.

Unbeaten in the first 18 Portuguese League games of 2010-11 and their eight Euro outings, Porto are currently on an incredible high and in young coach Andre Villas-Boas – who learnt his coaching craft as one of Jose Mourinho's assistants – they have a fox of a tactical operator.

They certainly will not be short of firepower, boasting the prolific Brazilian striker Hulk and Falcao, the top scorer in the Europa League this season with seven goals.

Prolific...Falcao has seven goals in the Europa League

Final venue...Dublin's Aviva Stadium will host the 2011 Europa League Final on May 18

AND THE REST....

Braga, who finished third behind Shakhtar Donetsk and Arsenal in their Champions League group, have reinforced with defender Marco Ramos from Lens and loan signings Kaka and Ukra.

Celebration...Lech Poznan

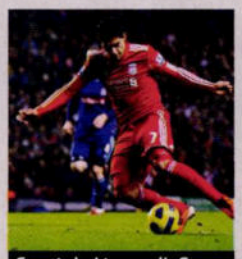
They are favourites to overcome Poland's **Lech Poznan**, who are in the last 32 for the first time.

Basle, currently second in the Swiss league, signed Austria international defender Aleksandar Dragovic and German Markus Steinhofer. They face **Spartak Moscow**, who are preparing for the new Russian league season by signing teenager Emin Makhmudov from recently disbanded club Saturn and Artur Valikaev from Rostov.

Rangers lost leading scorer Kenny Miller, sold to Bursaspor, and Lee McCulloch, who is out for the season with a knee injury. They have brought in brought in loanees El-Hadji Diouf and Kyle Bartley. Opponents **Sporting Lisbon** bade farewell to long-time goalscorer Liedson, who returned to Brazil.

Rubin Kazan, third in a tight Champions League group behind Copenhagen, picked up midfielder Petr Nemov from Saturn, while **Twente**, third behind Spurs and Inter, signed Oguchi Onyewu from Milan – a move which reunited the USA defender with his former coach at Standard Liege, Michel Preud'homme.

Sparta Prague, eclipsed domestically by Viktoria


Cup-tied...Liverpool's Suarez

Plzen, signed Tomas Pekhart and Andrej Keric from Jablonec and Slovan Liberec respectively, but sold Wilfried Bony to Dutch side Vitesse. Their opponents **Liverpool** will be without new signing Luis Suarez, who is cup-tied after appearing in the competition for Ajax.

Aris Salonika were rocked by the resignation of coach Hector Cuper ahead of their tie against **Manchester City**. But the Greek club still concluded a deal for Japan's Daisuke Sakata, while taking Shakhtar Donetsk's Nery Castillo (a former City player) and Parma's Danilo Pereira on loan.

Belarussian champions **BATE Borisov** signed midfielder Filipp Rudik from Naftan Novopolotsk ahead of their tie against French high-fliers **Paris Saint-Germain**.

Besiktas, struggling in the Turkish league, brought in high-profile Portuguese trio Manuel Fernandes (Valencia), Simao (Atletico Madrid) and Hugo Almeida (Werder Bremen) but lost defender Ersan Gulum for the rest of the season through injury. Opponents **Dynamo Kyiv** have coach Yuriy Semin back in charge after he left Lokomotiv Moscow.

Metalist Kharkiv signed Argentinian midfielder Sebastian Blanco from Lanus and his compatriot Jonatan Cristaldo from Veles Sarsfield. **Bayer Leverkusen** will be without striker Patrick Helmes, sold to Wolfsburg, and Swiss midfielder Tranquillo Barnetta, who has a long-term knee injury.

Greek side **PAOK** signed Brazilian midfielder Etto as they prepared to face free-scoring **CSKA Moscow**, the joint top scorers in the group stages, who signed Russia international centre-back Viktor Vasi from Spartak Nalchik and Latvia midfielder Aleksandrs Cauna.

Swiss side **Young Boys** signed midfielder Swedish midfielder Alexander Farnerud from Brondby ahead of their tie against Russian league champions **Zenit St Petersburg**, the other joint top scorers from the group stages.

Top scorers...Zenit

SIX OF THE BEST IN-FORM STRIKERS

Edinson CAVANI

Napoli (Ita)

ITALIAN title contenders Napoli have based much of their momentum this season on an ability to force the issue in the final stages of games, and no one exemplifies their 11th-hour potency more than tall and willowy Uruguayan front-runner Cavani who, following his loan move from Palermo last summer, has made a habit of putting on his very own late, late show with several dramatic last-grasp strikes.

"El Matador" is in the form of his life, mainly because, at long last, he is being used in his best position, which is leading the line.

Deployed as a second striker at Palermo and on the right wing for his country, Cavani has never made a secret of his preference for the role of target man, and Napoli coach Walter Mazzarri clearly agrees, using him as the lone ranger in a 3-4-2-1 formation.

After a brilliant hat-trick in January's 3-0 thumping of Juventus, *Gazzetta dello Sport* described Cavani, who turns 24 in February, as "impossible to mark" – a judgement shared by many Serie A defenders at present.

Papiss CISSE

Freiburg (Ger)

RESPONSIBLE for 15 of his side's 25 goals in the first half of the season, the quicksilver Senegal international looks set, given a fair wind in the next few months, to become the first African to top the Bundesliga scoring charts since Eintracht Frankfurt's Tony Yeboah in the 1992-93 and 1993-94 seasons.

The undisputed king of the castle at the Badenova-Stadion, the 25-year-old's huge current popularity contrasts starkly with the suspicion that greeted his arrival from French side Metz for £1.45million in December 2009. More used to bargain buys and youth development than splashing the cash, many Freiburg fans initially could not understand why their club had broken its transfer record on an unknown from the Gallic second tier. Now, though, they are all believers.

"When you discover a player of high quality at a relatively affordable price, you go for it," says Freiburg general manager Dirk Dufner. "Without Cisse's goals, last season we would have been relegated. Now he's helping us move on to bigger and better things."

HULK

Porto (Por)

OWING his nickname to a resemblance to American actor Lou Ferrigno, who played the comic-book creation in the TV series *The Incredible Hulk* in the 1970s, the Brazilian may not turn green when angry but, in his own way, he can be just as destructive as the raging emerald monster, proving too strong, quick and adroit on the ball for most defenders in the Portuguese league, where he has averaged a goal a game this season as his club have taken command of the championship race.

The 24-year-old, from the north-eastern Brazilian state of Paraiba, first hit the goal trail in Japan, scoring on demand for Consadole Sapporo and Tokyo Verdy before moving to Porto in 2008. Wreaking havoc through the middle or on the flanks, his left-footed shooting is pure TNT and in Givanildo Vieira de Souza, to give him his full name, "the Dragons" have a genuinely explosive finisher who has had an £84million release clause written into a contract which runs until the summer of 2014.

Nick Bidwell looks at half a dozen of Europe's top goalscorers this season

NENE

Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)

BACK in the late 1960s and through to the early 80s, Benfica and Portugal forward Nene won 11 league titles. Now, a quarter of a century after he retired, a namesake is making his own headlines in France.

The Brazilian version is a left-footed attacking midfielder who, in his first season at PSG following a £4.5million move from Monaco, has been nothing short of sensational with his goalscoring prowess, creativity on the left flank and excellent work from set-pieces. The consensus of opinion in the French capital is that he is PSG's best signing for a decade, while there are many who are happy to suggest that the Parisians are virtually a one-man team these days.

Surprisingly, the 29-year-old has yet to win any major honours in his career, gaining plaudits but not trophies during spells at Palmeiras and Santos in his homeland, with Mallorca, Alaves, Espanyol and Celta Vigo in Spain, and in France with Monaco, where he hit 14 goals last season.

David TREZEGUET

Hercules (Spa)

AFTER a hugely productive 10 years with Juventus – a golden epoch in which the France striker notched a remarkable 171 goals in 318 games to make him the Turin club's leading non-Italian marksman of all time – the 33-year-old's decision to move to newly promoted Hercules in Spain last summer as a free agent was seen by some as a pre-retirement, winding-down operation. But whatever the miles on the clock, the instinctive predator "Trezegol" remains as keen as ever for the penalty-box kill.

His goalscoring ability, coupled with his leadership qualities and intelligent play as a lone front man, have proved a godsend for Hercules coach Esteban Vigo. However, not everything in this particular garden is rosy.

Although happy living in Alicante, the home town of his wife, Trezeguet is far from happy with the way local club Hercules are being run and he has not been slow to slam his employers for the late payment of wages, the poor training facilities and a general lack of professionalism behind the scenes.

Bjorn VLEMINCKX

NEC (Hol)

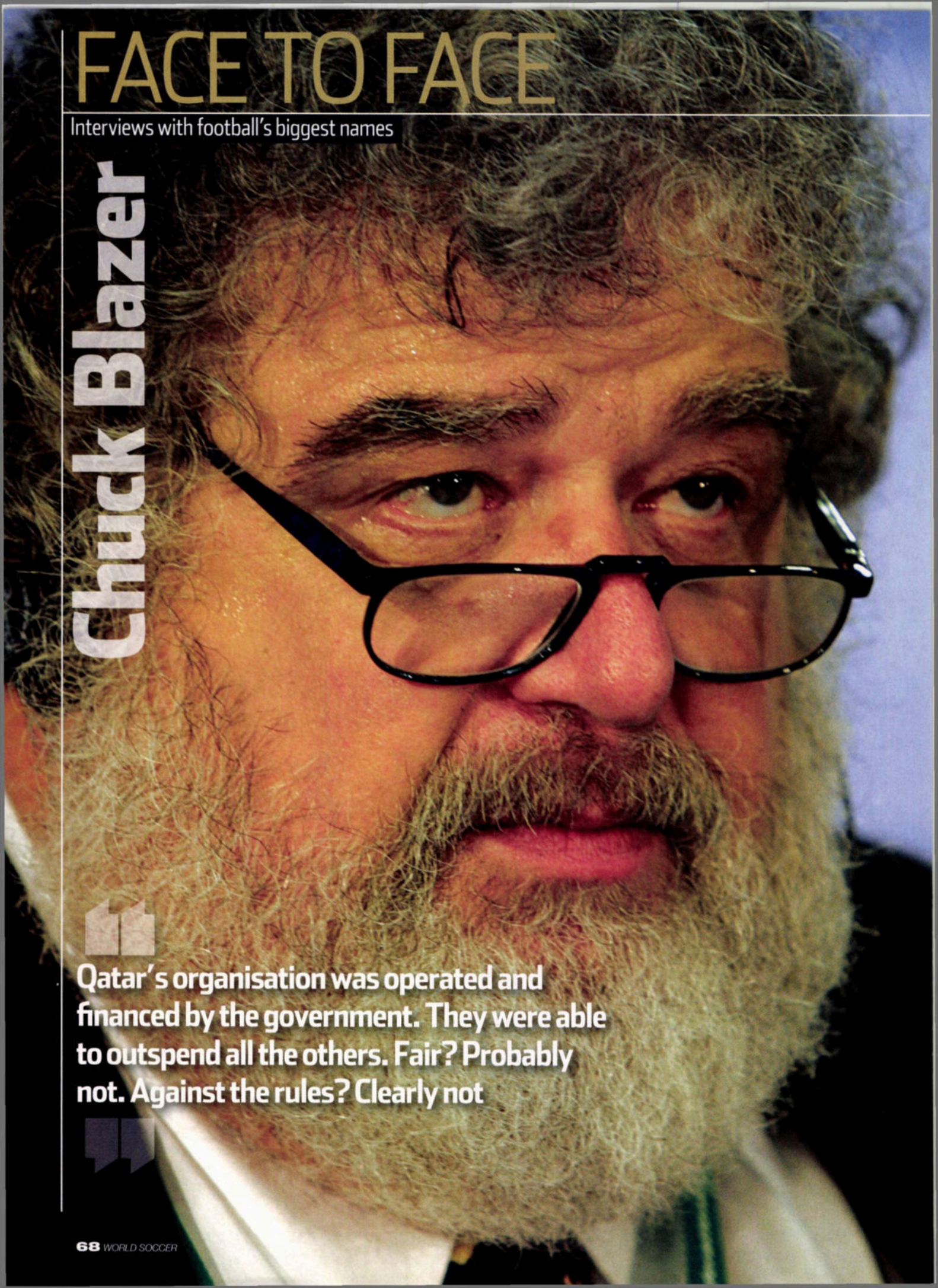
OFTEN attacked for a lack of discipline and his impulsiveness, ex-Ajax and Holland marksman Patrick Kluivert did not, at first glance, seem a coaching natural. But appearances can be deceptive and, as an assistant at Dutch outfit NEC, he has played a vital part in the development of Belgium striker Vleminckx, who has emerged as one of the best strikers in the Eredivisie this term.

Industrious, combative and strong in the air, the 25-year-old has the same no-nonsense approach to the game as Liverpool and Holland's Dirk Kuyt. However, NEC's most expensive signing – he cost £1.5million from Belgian side Mechelen at the start of last season – found the going tough in his first Dutch campaign, scoring just eight times in 32 games and receiving much criticism from the media and fans alike. But since Kluivert came on board in the summer to work with the Nijmegen club's forwards, the Flemish front runner has transformed himself into a goal machine, recording three hat-tricks and almost single-handedly keeping NEC out of the relegation zone.

FACE TO FACE

Interviews with football's biggest names

Chuck Blazer



Qatar's organisation was operated and financed by the government. They were able to outspend all the others. Fair? Probably not. Against the rules? Clearly not

Chuck Blazer

The CONCACAF general secretary reflects on FIFA's controversial World Cup decision

2022 and all that

FIRST, THE VOTING. Are you satisfied it was not distorted?
I'm satisfied that everyone was handed a ballot, that they went into a booth, that they marked a ballot, put it in a box, that the vote was counted...

Not quite what I meant. To the point: were votes being bought?
Ah. That's another matter. I've no way of knowing. I only know the parts I was exposed to. No one ever approached me with anything inappropriate. It was known, of course, that I was voting for the USA, but I received no offers and no phony offers [from undercover journalists]. All the countries I went to visit – England, Russia, Belgium and Holland, Japan – did everything above board and properly. The problem was the allegation that Spain and Qatar were combining. Did I believe that? Yes, I did. Did I go along with the official position that this wasn't an issue? No, I did not. I thought it was definitely an issue, but the administration at FIFA pooh-poohed it. They adopted a sort of "you're always going to have that" attitude. But in the instructions we were given, as I understood them, we were not supposed to do that sort of activity. What ultimately became an issue was all the talk about legacy. There was a very great misunderstanding about legacy. It was never part of the criteria for previous World Cup bids, so what does it mean? We did have a legacy coming out of the 1994 World Cup in the USA, but it was not part of the defined bid criteria. This time it was, and no one was sure how to handle the definition. The USA pointed to greater revenue for the 2022 World Cup and future ones, others said that they were going to build facilities that could be used afterwards.

Does anyone believe this business of the Qatar stadiums being shipped elsewhere?
I really cannot say – but they did an excellent sales campaign. So, legacy became a factor where people said: "I can be influenced if you're going give me something – like providing assistance in building our new training facility – that can be interpreted as legacy." All of a sudden it was presumed that kind of legacy was OK. It wasn't, it shouldn't have been, but a couple of guys went far beyond what they should have. It became confusing. It was badly done on our part.

The recommendations of the inspection committee did not seem to have carried much weight...
They were ignored completely. It didn't help that the report was distributed as late as it was – too late to have any impact on voting patterns that were already established. Those countries that were identified in the report as having deficiencies didn't want to debate them and no one else raised the issues. That part of the ExCo meeting was over in a matter of minutes. The whole process would probably be better if a concerted inspection was done prior to anyone being accepted as an eligible candidate. We would tell the bidding countries to put together their dossiers, then we send in the inspection committee to review whether they can do it and they report back on which are the viable candidates. They either qualify or disqualify candidates before the matter gets into the political arena.

Does Sepp Blatter's idea of an independent ethics watchdog carry any importance?
No, that was complete nonsense, it made no sense at all. He doesn't have the individual power to create it anyway. It's clearly important that we have a good ethics committee, but the biggest problem is that – once any enquiry moves beyond issues of public information – as an organisation we do not have the power to subpoena information. We've run into this problem in the past, with investigations of pay-offs to referees, for example. We have no power to get information from banks or other third parties. We're not in a great position as an investigating body. Once you start to get into subornment or pay-offs it's very, very difficult for anyone other than a proper police force to be able to establish what is going on – and even they might have difficulty when the processes involve sovereign governments.

Talking of governments, there was surely massive government "interference" in the bidding process?
The nature of the World Cup bidding process changed dramatically this time. Unlike most of the countries bidding, where you had national football associations presenting bids supported by their governments, with Qatar we came up against an association operated by the government and financed by the government. They were able to outspend all the others. Fair? Probably not. Against the rules? Clearly not. They used all the tools fairly and did a good job, but in the future we have to look at the financing of the bids and find a way to keep them within reasonable limits.

Should the voting process itself be altered? Should the individual votes be public, rather than private?
I was against a public vote; it appeared to me that there were ways that a member of the ExCo could be pressured by his own country – maybe political influence from outside football – and that a private vote could guard against that. But with our system as it is now, yes, maybe it would be better to let everyone know who voted for whom.

As for what happens in 2022 in Qatar, your comments about not being able to air-condition a whole country seem the crucial ones. Do we know anything about the medical effects of long-term exposure to air-conditioning?
Not that I'm aware of. But from the fans' perspective, they surely won't want to be indoors all the time.

There is talk of a winter World Cup. Is that what we're going to get?
Definitely not. Well, I hope not. It would upset all the things we've been working on for years – a unified calendar – not just the leagues, but our other FIFA competitions as well.

Does the vote for Qatar herald any major change in FIFA?
It represents, to a certain extent, a shift in the political balance, away from Euro dominance to a greater impact by the Asians. But the dividing lines are unclear. You do have UEFA, under Michel Platini's guidance, working with the Asians.

Could the vote be seen as a revolt by the rich have-nots – in the sense of power – against the Euro dominance of the sport?
I respect the fact that they won.

What is your sense of the reaction from the traditional football power countries, the rich European nations?
I think most of them are trying to be polite.

Do you sense any move growing to oppose the whole idea of a World Cup in Qatar?
Not at the moment.

Interview by Paul Gardner

WorldSoccer

SEND THIS COUPON TO

UK World Soccer Subscriptions, FREEPOST CY1061, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3BR
OVERSEAS & USA World Soccer Subscriptions, PO Box 272, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3FS, UK (please attach correct postage)

I WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE (UK ONLY)

- ☐ **6-monthly Direct Debit £17.25 (saving 30%)** full rate £24.70, save £14.90 a year
- ☐ **1 year £35.55 (save 28%)** full rate £49.40, save £13.90
- ☐ **2 years £66.20 (save 33%)** full rate £98.80, save £32.60

OVERSEAS SUBSCRIPTION

- ☐ USA 1 year **full price $118.42 / 30% discount price $82.85**
- ☐ USA 2 years **full price $236.84 / 33% discount price $158.65**
- ☐ Europe 1 year **full price €81.00 / 30% discount price €56.70**
- ☐ Europe 2 years **full price €162.00 / 33% discount price €108.50**
- ☐ R.O.W. 1 year **full price £85.40 / 30% discount price £59.75**
- ☐ R.O.W. 2 years **full price £170.80 / 33% discount price £114.40**

YOUR DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss: Forename:

Surname:

If you would like to receive emails from IPC Media and World Soccer containing news, special offers and product and service information and take part in our magazine research via email, please include your email below.

Email:

Address:

Postcode:

Home Tel No: (inc. area code)

Would you like to receive messages to your mobile from IPC Media and World Soccer containing news, special offers, product and service information and take part in our research? If yes, please include your mobile phone number here.

Mobile:

Year of birth: Y Y Y Y

PAYMENT DETAILS

I enclose cheque/international money order for £_____ made payable to IPC Media Ltd.

Or please debit my ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Visa Debit ☐ Amex ☐ Maestro (UK only)

Maestro Only

Expiry date: / / Card Issue No /Start Date

Signature: (I am over 18)

Pay £17.25 by 6 monthly Direct Debit

INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT

For office use only. Originator's reference - 764 221

A/C no

DIRECT Debit

Name of bank:

Address:

Postcode:

Account name:

Sort code: Account no:

Please pay IPC Media Ltd direct debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with IPC Media Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank or building society.

Signature: Date:
(I am over 18)

Offer open to new subscribers only. Direct Debit offer is available to UK subscribers only. Please allow up to six weeks for delivery of your first subscription issue (up to eight weeks overseas). The full subscription rate is for 1 year, 12 issues and includes postage and packaging. If the magazine ordered changes frequency per annum, we will honour the number of issues paid for, not the term of the subscription. Offer closes 28th February 2011. **For enquiries from the UK please call: 0844 848 0848, for overseas please call: +44 (0)330 3330 233 fax: 0845 675 9101 or e-mail: ipcsubsquadrantsubs.com.** World Soccer, published by IPC Media Limited, will collect your personal information to processyour order. World Soccer, and IPC Media would like to contact you by post or telephone to promote and ask your opinionon our magazines and services. Please tick here if you prefer not to hear from IPC Media ☐. IPC Media may occasionally pass your details to carefully selected organisations so that they can contact you by telephone or post with regards to promoting and researching their products and services. Please tick here if you prefer not to be contacted ☐. IPC Media who publish **World Soccer**, would like to send messages to your mobile with offers from carefully selected organisations and brands, promoting and researching their products and services. If you want to receive messages please tick here ☐. IPC would like to email you with offers from carefully selected organisations and brands, promoting and researching their products and services. If you want to receive these messages please tick here ☐.

13G

GREAT SAVINGS WORLDWIDE

Live outside the UK?

SAVE UP TO 33%

USA 1 YEAR
YOU PAY $82.85, saving 30%
on the full price of $118.42

USA 2 YEARS
YOU PAY $158.65, saving 33%
on the full price of $236.84

EUROPE 1 YEAR
YOU PAY €56.70, saving 30%
on the full price of €81.00

EUROPE 2 YEARS
YOU PAY €108.50, saving 33%
on the full price of €162.00

Rest Of World 1 YEAR
YOU PAY £59.75, saving 30%
on the full price of £85.40

Rest Of World 2 YEARS
YOU PAY £114.40, saving 33%
on the full price of £170.80

WorldSoccer®

ONE WORLD, ONE GAME

THE DIRECT DEBIT GUARANTEE • This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits • If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit IPC Media Ltd. will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request IPC Media Ltd. to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request • If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by IPC Media Ltd. or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society – If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when IPC Media Ltd. asks you to • You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Order online

Order hotline

WORLD SOCCER SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

UP TO SAVE 33%

Stay on top of the leagues - subscribe to World Soccer!

- Join the most knowledgeable people in football
- Save money on the subscription price
- Delivered direct to your door wherever you live in the world

www.worldsoccersubs.com/iwsqv

+44(0)844 848 0848 LINES OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK, 8am-9pm UK TIME. **QUOTE CODE 13G**

Michael ARROYO

ECUADOR

Wide man making up for lost time

THESE ARE key years for Ecuador if they are to build upon their first World Cup appearances in the 2002 and 2006 finals, and as such their footballing future lies with talents like Michael Arroyo.

While not an out-and-out winger, the 23-year-old is nevertheless comfortable on either flank, and with Antonio Valencia – or Joffre Guerron in his absence – on the right, Arroyo has established himself on the left of coach Reinaldo Rueda's preferred 4-4-2 line-up.

"I'm quick on the pitch and love to take people on," says the tall, burly attacking midfielder who packs a venomous shot in either foot.

Something of a child prodigy, he was on the books of Emelec at 12 and in the first team at 17. He made a good impression in the 2007 South American Under-20 Championship and showed real promise in the Libertadores Cup, but was then banned for six months after testing positive for marijuana.

Having served his suspension, he moved to Deportivo Quito and played a vital role in their 2009-title wining side, setting up the first goal and scoring the other two himself in a 3-2 triumph over Cuenca in the second leg of the Final.

Now with San Luis of Mexico, who he joined last May, this year's Libertadores Cup and the Copa America should afford him plenty of opportunities to make amends for past misdemeanours.

Tim Vickery

FACT FILE

Club San Luis (Mex)
Country Ecuador
Previous clubs Emelec, Deportivo Quito
Born April 23, 1987, in Guayaquil
International debut May 2010 v Mexico
International caps 7 (0 goals)
Honours 2009 Ecuadorian championship

Valentin STOCKER

Taking criticism and disappointment in his stride

SWITZERLAND

LEFT OUT OF Switzerland's World Cup squad and labelled a dirty player, it's fair to say that Basle's left-sided midfielder had his fair share of trials and tribulations in 2010.

Stocker's omission from the World Cup 23 was rough justice on a player who had maintained high standards throughout the previous domestic campaign. However, he also found himself at the eye of a media storm following wild, two-footed lunges at opponents from St Gallen and Zurich. Although both went unpunished, former World Cup referee Urs Meier observed: "The way Stocker made those challenges meant he was not in control of himself. It was extremely dangerous."

Having received the support of club boss Thorsten Fink – who said: "Those who've been on Stocker's case haven't a clue. He's no bad boy, no bruiser. He's a decent lad. I'd say he is more often the victim of fouls" – Stocker appears to have learnt his lesson.

Without sacrificing his work ethic, he is much more circumspect in the tackle these days and, rather than frantically charging around, he saves his focus for his trademark drives into enemy territory, making chances for others and seeking out goalscoring opportunities for himself.

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Club Basle
Country Switzerland
Born April 12, 1989, in Lucerne
International debut August 2008 v Cyprus
International caps 7 caps (3 goals)
Honours 2008 Swiss Super League, 2008 Swiss Cup, 2010 Swiss Super League, 2010 Swiss Cup

FRANCE

Dimitri PAYET

"Dim" finally starting to wise up

FIRST SEEN ON A TV show about a group of apprentices at Nantes, much of attacking midfielder Payet's early career in the spotlight was anything but enjoyable viewing.

Seemingly hell-bent on becoming a footballing nearly man, too petulant and self-satisfied for his own good and, for some strange reason, intent on littering his career path with obstacles of his own making, his bad-boy reputation was well-founded. At the age of 16 he was thrown out of the Le Havre soccer school for repeated infractions, at Nantes he clashed ferociously with former France goalkeeper Fabien Barthez during a training session and last season he aimed a head-butt at Saint-Etienne team-mate Blaise Matuidi during a game.

Consistency also used to be an alien concept for "Dim", a player who lost confidence at the slightest setback and inexplicably took his foot off the gas when in a purple patch. This season, though, a new and vastly improved player has emerged. More mature and less inclined to go missing in games, the 23-year-old has been one of the most effective performers in Ligue 1, and when France coach Laurent Blanc called up Payet for the country's Euro 2012 qualifiers in October he came off the bench to create goals in victories over Romania and Luxembourg.

"If we are seeing a different Payet at the moment it's because he has realised that it's not enough to be thought of as a kid with huge potential," says Saint-Etienne coach Christophe Galtier.

"I sense that he really wants to make a big breakthrough in his career."

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Club Saint-Etienne
Country France
Born March 29, 1987, in Saint-Pierre, Reunion
Previous clubs Nantes
International debut October 2010 v Romania
International caps 3 (0 goals)

Senijad IBRICIC

RUSSIA

Bosnian looking to impress in Moscow

BOUGHT BY Lokomotiv Moscow from Hajduk Split in the January transfer window for £4.2million, Bosnia's attacking midfielder described his move to the Russian capital as a "definite step-up in quality", and there can be no doubt at all that the 25-year-old deserves his upgrade.

For every second of his time at Hajduk – who he joined in a £1.5m deal from FK Zagreb in 2008 – Ibricic proved the heart and soul of the attacking operation in Split and he was voted the Croat league's player of the year last term, coming second in the scoring charts with 17 goals and hitting the target in both legs of Hajduk's Croatian Cup Final victory over Sibenik.

Keen to improve on their fifth-place finish in the Russian Premier League last year, Lokomotiv have been assiduously collecting all manner of reinforcements in the close season. But of all the new faces, Ibricic is far and away the most important. His subtle ball skills and imagination should inject some much-needed pizazz into their midfield and he is also an emphatic finisher – an expert at turning up in the box unannounced.

Lokomotiv apparently fell in love with Ibricic when watching him turn on the style for Hajduk in a Europa League tie against Unirea Urziceni of Romania last summer when he put on a veritable one-man show. The solo goal he scored was sheer artistry, dribbling from his own half, avoiding challenge after challenge and finally curling home a shot from just inside the box.

"Ibricic is 100-per-cent class, one of the best players to have come out of our country for years," enthuses former Yugoslavia sweeper and ex-Bosnia coach Faruk Hadzibegic, who these days leads French side Arles-Avignon. "I can visualise him doing exceptionally in Russia then moving on to Spain, Italy or England.

"He's going about things the right way: step by step. He's someone born to turn a game. He can create, he can score and he has a flair for the unusual.

"At international level, his number one problem is that Bosnia has great strength in depth in attacking midfielders. He faces stiff competition from Zvjezdan Misimovic, Miralem Pjanic and Sejad Salihovic. The answer might be to use him further forward. He could be equally dangerous just off Edin Dzeko or on the wing.

"Wasting his ability would be a crime."

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Club Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus)
Country Bosnia-Herzegovina
Born September 26, 1985, in Kotor Varos
Previous clubs Podgrmec, NK Zagreb (Cro), Hajduk Split (Cro)
International caps 30 (4 goals)
International debut February 2005 v Iran
Honours 2010 Croatian Cup

FIVE TO FOLLOW: ASIAN CUP DISCOVERIES

Michael Church picks the new talent from the recent tournament in Qatar

Club/Country Pakhtakor/Uzbekistan
Born November 25, 1987
Position Defender

Odil AKHMEDOV

TAKING on the role of emergency centre-half did little to quell the 23-year-old's attacking instincts and he scored the opening goal of the tournament with a stunning 35-yard drive against Qatar. He then weighed in with another goal in the 2-2 draw with China, both starting and finishing a fine team move with a clinical close-range finish.

While his defensive inadequacies were occasionally exposed, his impressive surges into midfield suggest that the Uzbeks may have unearthed a talent for the future.

Club/Country Saipa/Iran
Born April 3, 1990
Position Forward

Karim ANSARIFARD

HAVING been nurtured in his early career by Ali Daei, many see the 20-year-old as the legendary striker's natural successor – and there are unmistakable similarities between the pair, especially in terms of physique.

Scorer of the winning goal against North Korea in the group stage, he looks likely to end up in Germany – Borussia Dortmund lead a host of Bundesliga sides chasing his signature – although Daei hasn't yet given up hope of taking the young forward to Persepolis, where he is coach.

Club/Country Chunnam Dragons/South Korea
Born May 28, 1991
Position Forward

JI Dong-won

HE had made just one international appearance before going to Qatar, but established himself as a regular in Cho Kwang-rae's starting line-up by the end of the finals.

Having impressed at last year's Asian Under-19 Championship in China, he has made the transition to the national team with few difficulties, replacing injured World Cup striker Park Chu-young. Four goals in six games – braces against both India and Uzbekistan – saw him finish as the tournament's second-top scorer, one behind team-mate Koo Ja-cheol.

Club/Country Jeju United/South Korea
Born February 27, 1989
Position Midfielder

KOO Ja-cheol

PRIOR to the finals, he had already garnered a reputation as one of Korean football's up-and-coming players with his performances for 2010 K-League runners-up Jeju United.

Played out of position at the Asian Cup – he usually operates as a defensive midfielder with his club side – the 21-year-old relished the increase in attacking responsibility as he was pushed up behind lone striker Ji Dong-won.

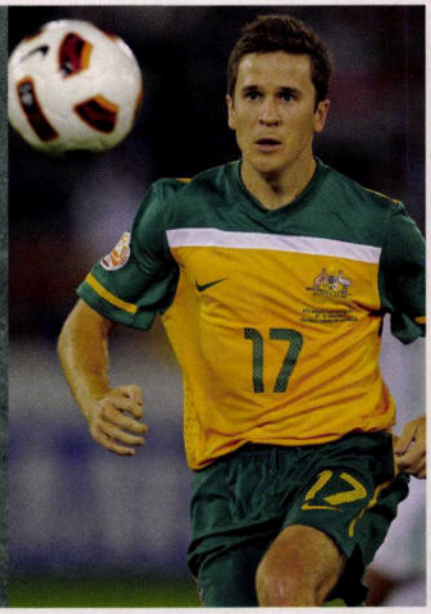
Scored four times in the group stage, before netting against Uzbekistan in the third-place play-off to become the tournament's top scorer and put clubs in Europe on alert.

Club/Country Brisbane Roar/Australia
Born January 11, 1983
Position Midfielder

Matt McKAY

AFTER coming off the bench in Australia's opening games against India and South Korea, he forced himself into the starting line-up as Holger Osieck rejigged his midfield following the suspension of Brett Emerton.

Impressed against Bahrain and kept his place for the rest of the tournament at the expense of the Blackburn Rovers winger, and it was from his cross that Harry Kewell scored the winner against Iraq in the quarter-finals. Osieck stuck with him through to the Final, where he played all 120 minutes in the defeat by Japan.



SOCCER CITIES

MUNICH The clubs, the history, what to see, how to get there

The haves and the have-nots

Peterjon Cresswell visits the Bavarian home of the team they call "FC Hollywood" and their not-so-fortunate rivals

Colour match...the futuristic Allianz Arena undergoes a morph when either Bayern (left) or 1860 (above) are playing at home

FOOTBALL IN MUNICH embraces every German cliche in the book, with Bavarians in lederhosen rubbing shoulders with denim-clad locals covered in sew-on badges, sitting in a state-of-the-art stadium that changes colour to reflect who is playing at home.

With their record 22 German league titles and four European Cup/Champions League triumphs, the allure of reigning Bundesliga champions Bayern unsurprisingly puts all of their domestic rivals in the shadows these days. That, however, has not always been the case, and in the pre-war and immediate post-war eras it was the club with whom they now share the Allianz Arena, TSV 1860, who ruled the roost in Munich.

Both clubs were formed in the late 19th century – when gymnastics was the obligatory discipline and prior to Bavarian schools lifting a ban on playing football – and Bayern, with its fan base in the bohemian Schwabing district, won the national title in 1932. But with the rise of Nazism, the club's Jewish management fled the country and the club was forced to adopt amateur status. It was 1860 – then located in the working-class area of Giesing – who became the favoured club of the 1940s, and when the inaugural Bundesliga began in 1963 they, rather than Bayern, were invited to join.

A German Cup win for 1860 in 1964 was followed by an appearance in the following year's European Cup-winners Cup Final, where they lost 2-0 to West Ham United at Wembley. Twelve months later the club won its only Bundesliga title, mercurial coach Max Merkel's side playing a 4-2-4 system with Rudi Brunnenmeier up front and folk hero Petar Radenkovic in goal.

Conquering trio

In that same year, Bayern won the German Cup with a side that included precocious young half-back Franz Beckenbauer, who went on to star in that summer's World Cup, a squat but lightning-quick Gerd Muller up front and Sepp Maier in goal. This trio would become the axis that helped Bayern to conquer first Germany and then Europe.

Franz Roth's goal beat Rangers 1-0 in the 1967 European Cup-winners' Cup before new coach Branko Zebec led Bayern to the Bundesliga's first double in 1969.

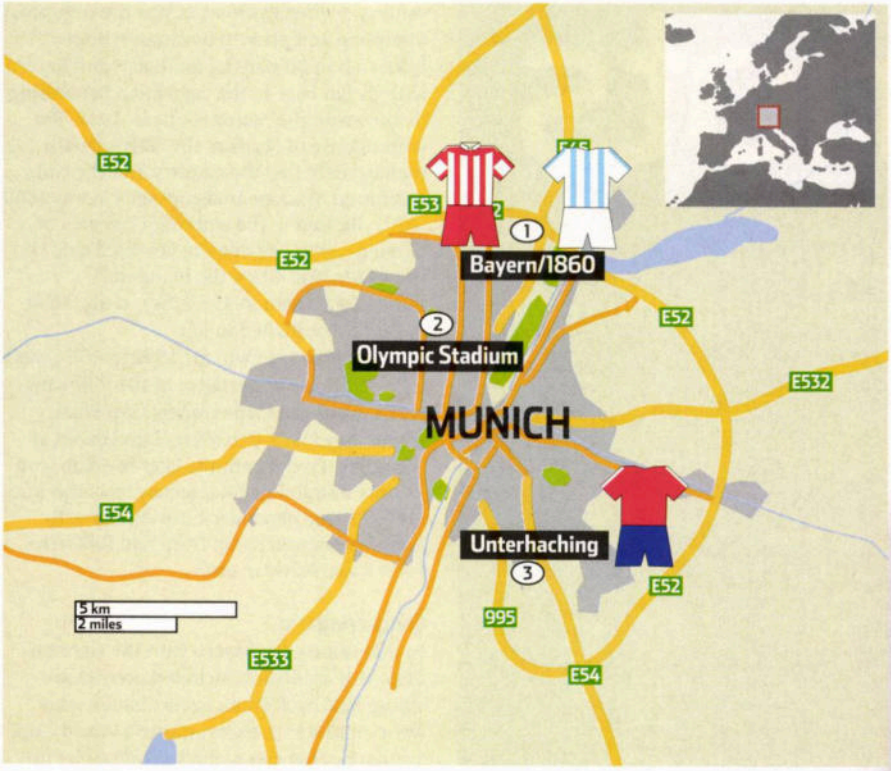
As 1860 slipped away to spend the best part of the next two decades playing lower-league football, Bayern got bigger and better. Leaving the Grunwalder Stadion that they shared with 1860, Bayern moved into the Olympiastadion that had been built for the 1972 Games and brought in young stars such as Paul Breitner and Uli Hoeness. Under coach Udo Lattek they won the first of three consecutive titles in 1972, destroying Schalke 5-1 in the decisive match, and also provided most of the West Germany side

THE STADIUMS

1 ALLIANZ ARENA
Opened in 2005 in time to host the 2006 World Cup, the stadium offers the latest in modern technology and is the only one in the world whose exterior changes colour. Home to both Bayern and 1860, the ground holds 66,000 and will stage the 2012 Champions League Final.

2 OLYMPIASTADION
Built for the 1972 Summer Olympics with an original capacity of 80,000, the stadium hosted the 1974 World Cup Final and the 1988 Euro Final, as well as the European Cup Finals of 1979, 1993 and 1997. Bayern and 1860 stopped playing home matches here in 2005.

3 GENERALI SPORTPARK
Opened in 1992, the home of third-tier Unterhaching is able to hold 15,000 people.



that won the European Championship that summer.

They then went on to win three consecutive European Cups. The first, against Atletico Madrid, required a last-minute equaliser from Georg Schwarzenbeck to force a triumphant replay; in 1975, they suffered brutal treatment at the hands of Leeds United before roaring back with two cleverly taken goals; and in 1976 the Bavarians rode their luck against a talented Saint-Etienne side to win 1-0 in Glasgow.

Striking out...Bayern fans head for the stadium

With Beckenbauer's departure for New York Cosmos in 1977, the retirement of several other integral players and an increasingly competitive Bundesliga, Bayern had to wait until the 1980s for more significant silverware.

This was a decade of player power and ego battles – as Breitner, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and later Lothar Matthaus held court on and off the pitch – but they still managed to claim seven titles in 10 years, although they did suffer two bitter European Cup Final defeats, to Aston Villa and Porto.

Bayern let Europe's ultimate prize slip away again, in 1999, thanks to two injury-time goals by Manchester United, but under the long-term tutelage of wily Ottmar Hitzfeld they bounced back to win the 2001 Champions League on penalties against Valencia.

Meanwhile, disciplinarian coach Werner Lorant spent the 1990s rebuilding 1860, leading the club back into the Bundesliga and even gaining a Champions League spot in 2000. Lorant eventually left after falling out with club president Karl-Heinz Wildmoser, who further angered fans by agreeing to ground-share the new Allianz Arena with

Weight of expectation...Franck Ribery is pinned down by his team-mates as Bayern celebrate against Wolfsburg

> **Bayern have gone from strength to strength, accruing vast wealth**

Bayern. A bribery scandal saw the eventual demise of Wildmoser, and TSV are currently playing their seventh season of second-tier football.

The third team in the Bavarian capital are Unterhaching, who were formed in 1925 and play on the southern outskirts of the city. Although currently in the third tier of German football, the club enjoyed two seasons, 1999 and 2001, of playing alongside Bayern and 1860 in the top flight.

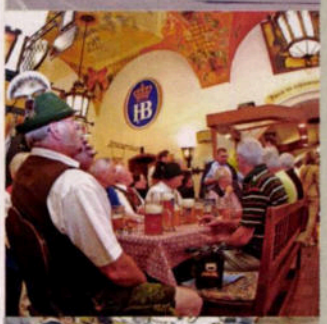
Strength to strength

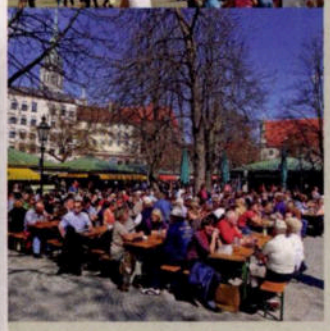
Meanwhile, Bayern – with Hoeness as club president – have gone from strength to strength, accruing vast wealth with club shops all over Germany. The nation's most popular yet also most hated club, "FC Hollywood", as they have become known, have used their financial muscle to land some of the country's best talent of recent years, such as Jurgen Klinsmann, Stefan Effenberg and Mario Basler.

However, while the Bayern of today can still attract signings such as Franck Ribery and Miroslav Klose, they are bound by the German FA's strict rules of financial probity which means they cannot plunge into the mega debt of Real Madrid or Manchester United for the signatures and salaries of the world's biggest stars.

Nevertheless, under the shrewd guidance of coach Louis Van Gaal, Bayern reached the Champions League Final last May, where they lost to Internazionale – and the pair face each other again in the last 16 of this season's competition. ●

MUNICH SURVIVAL GUIDE





The best of Bavaria

● ARRIVAL & TRANSPORT

Munich Airport is 22 miles north east of the city's main railway station and can be reached by Lufthansa buses (every 20 minutes, €10.50) or S-Bahn line 1 or 8 (€10.80). A taxi will cost around €60. Public transport comprises S-Bahn and U-Bahn trains, trams and buses, with one ticket costing €2.50 and a day pass €5. Validate on station platforms or once on board.

● HOTELS & INFORMATION

The tourist office is at Bahnhofsplatz 2 (+49 89 2339 6500, www.muenchen-tourist.de). For family-run accommodation between €50 and €100 you could do worse than the Hotel Gastehaus Englischer Garten (Liebergesellstrasse 8, +49 89 383 9410). Youth hostels are aplenty, but nothing for the two weeks of Oktoberfest unless you book in advance.

● EATING & DRINKING

Many chic, cosmopolitan venues are both cafe and restaurant. Don't miss Netzer & Overath (Baaderstrasse 33, +49 89 1392 7970, www.netzer-overath.de), a cool, contemporary football club/club with a difference. For tradition, brewery houses such as the Spatenhaus (Residenzstrasse 12, +49 89 290 7060) offer hearty regional fare and beer by the *mass*, a huge hefty glass. Nightlife centres on Schwabing. The less pretentious industrial complex of Kunstpark Ost, near Ostbahnhof, houses two dozen bars and clubs.

● DAYTIME ENTERTAINMENT

At the heart of the city, Marienplatz is dominated by the twin domes of Frauenkirche. In the city park of the Englischer Garten stand the Bavarian National Museum (Prinzregentenstrasse 3, +49 89 211 2401) and House of Art (+49 89 211 270). The three-venue Pinakothek complex contains medieval masters, modern art and design. The Deutsches Museum (Museumsinsel 1, +49 89 21791) has a vast collection related to Munich's technological and scientific development. For shopping, try Maximilianstrasse or Kaufingerstrasse.

● MATCH DAY

The Allianz Arena is a short walk from Frottmaning U-Bahn station on the U6 line. It features bars at either end, with TSV's Hacker Pschorr Fantreff in the Nordkurve and Bayern's Paulaner Fantreff in the Sudkurve. Each end also has a megastore. Payment at kiosks around the ground is with an in-house chip card. Bayern ticket information is available at https://tickets.fcbayern.de/Internetverkauf/Greeting.aspx or +49 89 699 31 333. TSV (www.tsv1860.de) charge €28/€36 for seats and €14 for standing. Ground tours (€10) take place at 1pm daily. Olympiastadion tours are available for €2 but do not take place when events are being staged. Unterhaching's Generali Sportpark is reached by S3 towards Holzkirchen to station Pheasant Park. The tram runs every 20 minutes.

FORTHCOMING FIXTURES

• ALLIANZ ARENA

Mar 2 Bayern Munich v Schalke
Mar 4 1860 v Rot-Weiss Oberhausen
Mar 12 Bayern v Hamburg
Mar 15 Bayern v Internazionale (Ita)
Mar 18 1860 v Karlsruhe
Apr 2 Bayern v Borussia M'Gladbach

• GENERALI SPORTPARK

Mar 5 Unterhaching v Werder Bremen II
Mar 12 Unterhaching v Stuttgart II
Apr 2 Unterhaching v Wacker Burghausen

(always check fixtures before travelling)

More Soccer Cities at worldsoccer.com/travel

AMERICAN SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

SAVE up to 33%

When you subscribe to WorldSoccer

- ★ Be the first to get your copy of the world's only truly global soccer magazine!
- ★ The Bible of international soccer REUTERS
- ★ Delivered to your door every month

www.worldsoccersubs.com/iwsqx

HOTLINE +44(0)844 848 0848

LINES OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK, 8am-9pm UK TIME. **QUOTE CODE 13F**

SEND COUPON TO: World Soccer Subscriptions, PO Box 272, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, UK, RH16 3FS (please attach correct postage)

CODE 13F

YES I would like to subscribe to World Soccer

☐ 1 year – paying just $82.85 saving 30% (full price $118.42)
☐ 2 years – paying just $158.65 saving 33% (full price $236.80)

PAYMENT DETAILS

I enclose a Cheque/postal order for $ _____ made payable to IPC Media Ltd.

Or please debit my: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Amex ☐ Maestro

Card No: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

☐☐☐ Maestro Expiry date: ☐☐ / ☐☐

☐☐ / ☐☐ Issue No./Valid from

Signature: Date:
(I am over 18)

YOUR DETAILS

Mrs/Ms/Miss/Mr Forename

Surname

Address

Post/Zipcode

Country/State

Home Tel
(inc. country/area code)

If you would like to receive emails from IPC and World Soccer containing news, special offers and product and service information and take part in our magazine research via email, please include your email address.

Email

Would you like to receive text messages from IPC and World Soccer containing news, special offers and product and service information and take part in our magazine research via phone, please include your mobile phone number.

Mobile

Year of Birth Y Y Y Y

Final closing date for all orders is 30th April 2011. All prices are discounted from the full subscription rate advertised in each title, include P&P and are correct at time of going to press. Credit/debit card charges will be taken in sterling. If the magazine ordered changes frequency per annum, we will honour the number of issues paid for, not the term of the subscription. For enquiries and overseas rates call: 0044844 848 0848, or email: ipcsubs@quadrantsubs.com. World Soccer, published by IPC Media Ltd (IPC), will collect your personal information to process your order. World Soccer and IPC would like to contact you by post or telephone to promote and ask your opinion on our magazines and services. Please tick here if you prefer not to hear from us ☐. IPC may occasionally pass your details to carefully selected organisations so that they can contact you by telephone or post with regards to promoting and researching their products and services. Please tick here if you prefer not to be contacted ☐. IPC, would like to send messages to your mobile with offers from carefully selected organisations and brands, promoting and researching their products and services. If you want to receive messages, please tick here ☐. Please allow up to eight weeks for delivery of your first subscription issue. Delivery by direct entry will take 5-12 days.

PRO-DIRECT
soccer : the professional's choice

The World's largest Online Soccer Store

Introducing the New
Mercurial Vapor Superfly II
Available **NOW** from Pro-Direct Soccer

Nike Mercurial Vapor Superfly II
Windchill/Dark Obsidian/Chrlorine
£274.99

PRO-DIRECT ★★★★★★ ELITE LEVEL

PRO PERSONALISATION BOOT iD
PRO-DIRECT MAKE IT YOURS

PRO PERSONALISATION
iconic, original and **the best**

See the Complete **Nike Mercurial** Range including Juniors Online

PRO-DIRECT ★★★★ CLUB LEVEL
Nike Mercurial Miracle
£89.99

PRO-DIRECT ★★★★★ PRO LEVEL
Nike Mercurial Vapor VI
£179.99

PRO-DIRECT ★★★ TEAM LEVEL
Nike Mercurial Glide
£64.99
JUNIORS-£44.99

The World's Largest Online Football Store
www.prodirectsoccer.com

FOOTBALL KITS

subside sports

2011 BOCA JNRS HOME SHIRT
£64.99

2011 BOCA JNRS HOME SHIRT + PALERMO 9
£74.99

2011 RIVER PLATE HOME SHIRT
£64.99

2011 DEPORTES TOLIMA HOME SHIRT
£54.99

2011 PENAROL HOME SHIRT
£64.99

2011 INDEPENDIENTE HOME SHIRT
£54.99

TEL: 0845 8382442
EMAIL: SALES@SUBSIDE.CO.UK
WWW.SUBSIDE.CO.UK

PROGRAMMES

FREE PROGRAMME CATALOGUE

To receive a **FREE** copy of our latest catalogue (listing several thousand different mint condition Big Match and League teams programmes etc.) please send your name and address to:
STEVE EARL FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES (WS)
BROAD ST., BUNGAY, SUFFOLK NR35 1AH
01986 892621
www.footballprogs.co.uk
Pay Pal and Debit/Credit cards welcomed

Michael Hewitt Programmes
For our introductory catalogue covering all aspects of football collecting:
PROGRAMMES/MATCH TICKETS/BADGES/MEMORABILIA
just send your full address.
"Overseas: 1st Catalogue free. UK: Send 60p"
LARGE EUROPEAN/WORLD CUP AND INTERNATIONAL SECTIONS.
WE BUY OR EXCHANGE FROM ALL COUNTRIES - CARRIAGE PAID.
All major CREDIT and DEBIT cards accepted.
20 Suzanne Crescent, South Elmsall, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF9 2BB.
Telephone: 01977 643107
Fax: 01977 648655
E-mail: HEWITTPROG@aol.com

INTERNET

FOOTBALL MONDO ®

JOIN US AT
footballmondo.com

VIDEO/CINE FILMS

Soccer Matches on DVD 1958-2009
World Cups, Euro Champs, Euro Cups, Copa America, Maradona, Pele, Cruyff, Brazil, Milan, Juventus, Barcelona, Southern America, Europe, Asia.
Email for 2,000 Games List
sammi271@btinternet.com

Please mention **WorldSoccer** when replying to adverts in this magazine

WorldSoccer®
To advertise here contact Lee Hilton
020 3148 2537
lee_hilton@ipcmedia.com

FASHION

FOOTBALL ICONS - FASHION ICONS! CHECK OUT OUR GALLERY OF FOOTBALL ICONS FROM THE PAST & PRESENT. UPDATED DAILY!

Cult Zeros is a bit of fun. There is no place for bigotry, sectarianism, racism, sexism, hatefulness (or cussing of Fulham players!!). Cult Zeros have the right to refuse to do requests they believe inappropriate. Cheers!

www.cultzeros.co.uk

WORLD SERVICE

THE ULTIMATE GLOBAL NEWS AND RESULTS SECTION

Asian action

Daiki Iwamasa (No3) climbs highest to beat his Japan team-mate Makoto Hasebe and South Korea forward Koo Ja-cheol in the Asian Cup semi-final showdown at the Al Gharafa Stadium in Doha. More information, page 84.

INTERNATIONALS

Page 84 **Asian Cup**
Page 85 **Central American Cup**
Page 86 **Nile Basin Tournament**
Page 87 **Friendlies**
Page 87 **Friendlies (fixtures)**
Page 87 **Euro 2012 qualifiers (fixtures)**
Page 88 **African Nations Cup qualifiers (fixtures)**
Page 89 **Copa America (fixtures)**

PREVIEW

Page 90 **Libertadores Cup**
Page 94 **Argentina**

DIGEST

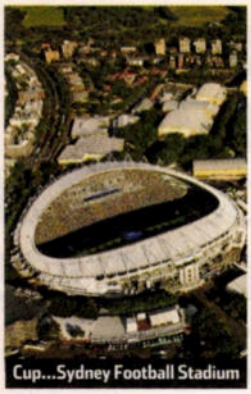
Page 96 **Asian Cup**
Page 99 **People in the news**
Page 100 **Transfers**

CLUB RESULTS

Page 102 **UEFA Champions League**
Page 102 **Europa League**
Page 102 **European leagues**
Page 105 **ESM Golden Shoe**
Page 108 **Libertadores Cup**
Page 109 **South American leagues**
Page 109 **CONCACAF**
Page 110 **Africa**
Page 110 **Asia**
Page 111 **Oceania**
Page 111 **Forthcoming Fixtures**

SQUADS

Page 112 **Asian Cup**


Cup...Sydney Football Stadium

AUSTRALIA

Down under next time

Australia will host the next Asian Cup, in January 2015.

The tournament will feature 16 teams, with matches to be played at four or five selected venues from Sydney's ANZ Stadium, Sydney Football Stadium and Parramatta Stadium, Melbourne's Etihad Stadium and AAMI Park, Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium, Gold Coast's Skilled Park and Canberra Stadium.

CHILE

Bielsa still the boss

Marcelo Bielsa will remain in charge of the national team until the end of this summer's Copa America, after which he will consider his future.

After leading *La Roja* at last year's World Cup, the 55-year-old Argentinian announced his intention to resign in November 2010 following the appointment of Jorge Segovia as president of the FA, claiming it would be impossible for them to have a working relationship.

However, Segovia was excluded from the job after details were made public regarding conflicts of interest in his business dealings. He is replaced by Sergio Jaude.

Still there...Bielsa

RESULTS

ASIAN CUP

In Qatar

Group A

Jan 7 - Doha
Qatar 0
Uzbekistan 2 (Akhmedov 59, Djeparov 77)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 37,143. **Ref:** Nishimura (Jap)
Qatar: Burhan - Ismaeil, Mohammed, Majed, Al Ghanim, Lawrence, Rizik, Fabio Cesar (Ahmed 80), Al Marri (El Sayed 62), Yaser (Ibrahim 61), Soria.
Uzbekistan: Nesterov - S Juraev (Andreev 54), Akhmedov, Haydarov, Djeparov, Kapadze, Khasanov (Tursunov 66), Karpenko, Geynrikh (Novkarov 89), Shatskikh.

Jan 8 - Doha
Kuwait 0
China 2 (Zhang Linpeng 58, Deng Zhuoxiang 67)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 7,423. **Ref:** Williams (Aus)
Kuwait: Al Khaldi - Al Taher, Fadhel, Matoug, Nada, Al Enezi (Nayaf 84), Al Amer, Ali (Mashan 71), Al Ateeqi, Naser (Awad 38), Al Mutwa.
Sent off: Nada 36min.
China: Yang Zhi - Zhao Peng (Liu Jianye 58), Du Wei, Zhang Linpeng, Rong Hao, Zhao Xuri (Yu Tao 77), Deng Zhuoxiang, Qu Bo (Hao Junmin 46), Yang Hao, Yu Hai, Yang Xu.

Jan 12 - Doha
Uzbekistan 2 (Shatskikh 41, Djeparov 65)
Kuwait 1 (Al Mutwa pen 50)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 3,481. **Ref:** Shukralla (Bhn)
Uzbekistan: Nesterov - Ismailov, Akhmedov, Haydarov, Djeparov, Andreev, Kapadze, Karpenko, Geynrikh (Novkarov 74), Shatskikh (Khasanov 54), Tursunov (Galiulin 90+1).
Kuwait: Al Khaldi - Al Taher, Awad (Ajab 80), Fadhel, Matoug, Al Enezi, Al Amer, Ali (Mashan 71), Al Ateeqi (Nayef 46), Naser, Al Mutwa.

Jan 12 - Doha
China 0
Qatar 2 (Ahmed 27, 45+2)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 30,778. **Ref:** Kim (SKo)
China: Zeng Cheng - Zhao Peng, Du Wei, Zhang Linpeng, Rong Hao, Deng Zhuoxiang, Qu Bo, Yu Tao (Zhou Haibin 59), Yang Hao, Yu Hai (Hao Junmin 46), Gao Lin (Yang Xu 42).
Qatar: Burhan - Ismaeil (Afif 90+1), Kasola (Al Hamad 61), Mohammed, Majed, Al Ghanim, Lawrence, Rizik, Ahmed (Al Marri 64), El Sayed, Soria.

Jan 16 - Doha
Qatar 3 (Mohammed 12, El Sayed 16, Fabio Cesar 86)
Kuwait 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 28,339. **Ref:** Malik (Sin)
Qatar: Burhan - Ismaeil, Kasola (Al Hamad 88), Mohammed, Majed, Al Ghanim, Lawrence, Rizik, Ahmed (Fabio Cesar 72), El Sayed (Afif 80), Soria.
Kuwait: Al Khaldi - Al Taher (Ajab 46), Fadhel, Matoug, A Al Rashidi, Al Enezi, Al Sheikh (Mashan 62), Al Amer, Ali, Nayef (Khalaf 79), Al Mutwa.

Jan 16 - Doha
China 2 (Yu Hai 6, Hao Junmin 56)
Uzbekistan 2 (Akhmedov 30, Geynrikh 46)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 3,529. **Ref:** Al Hilali (Oma)
China: Yang Zhi - Li Xuepeng, Du Wei, Zhang Linpeng, Rong Hao, Zhao Xuri (Liu Jianye 46), Hao Junmin, Wang Song, Yang Hao (Deng Zhuoxiang 73), Yu Hai (Yang Xu 60), Gao Lin.
Uzbekistan: Nesterov - Ismailov, Akhmedov, Haydarov, Djeparov (Salomov 85), Andreev, Kapadze, Karpenko (Mulladjanov 74), Novkarov (Tursunov 62), Geynrikh, Shatskikh.

ASIAN CUP – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uzbekistan	3	2	1	0	6	3	7
Qatar	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
China	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Kuwait	3	0	0	3	1	7	0

Group B

Jan 9 - Doha
Japan 1 (Yoshida 90+2)
Jordan 1 (Abdel-Fattah 45)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 6,255. **Ref:** Malik (Sin)
Japan: Kawashima - Konno, Nagatomo, Uchida, Yoshida, Endo, Matsui (Okasaki 58), Hasebe, K Honda (Fujimoto 90), Kagawa, Maeda (Lee 46).
Jordan: Shafi - Al Salman, B Bani Yaseen, Abu-Hashhash, Fathi, Aqel (Al Dmeiri 80), Abdelrahman, Amer Deeb, Abdel-Fattah, Al Saify, Abdallah Deeb (Abdelhalim 72).

Jan 9 - Al Rayyan
Saudi Arabia 1 (Al Jassam 60)
Syria 2 (Al Husein 38, 63)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,768. **Ref:** Kim (SKo)
Saudi Arabia: Abdullah - Shuhail, Hawsawi, Al Harbi, Al Saeed, Ateef, Aboshgair (Al Abid 68), Kariri, Autef (Al Jassam 46), Al Shamrani (Hazazi 57), Al Qahtani.
Syria: Balhous - Abduldaim, A Dyab, Ismail, Sabagh, Deka, Al Hussien (Habib 76), Al Husein, Ayan (Aouad 83), Al Zino, Malki (Abdullah 65).

Jan 13 - Al Rayyan
Jordan 1 (Abdelrahman 42)
Saudi Arabia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 17,349. **Ref:** Al Badwawi (UAE)
Jordan: Shafi - Monir, Al Salman, B Bani Yaseen, Abu-Hashhash, Fathi, Abdelrahman, Amer Deeb (Hijah 90), Abdel-Fattah (Abdelhalim 83), Al Saify, Abdallah Deeb (Abukeshek 69).
Saudi Arabia: Abdullah - Shuhail (Al Dawsari 87), Hawsawi, Al Harbi, Al Mousa, Al Shalhoub (Al Abid 65), Kariri, Autef (Al Shamrani 46), Al Jassam, Hazazi, Al Qahtani.

Jan 13 - Doha
Syria 1 (Al Khatib pen 76)
Japan 2 (Hasebe 35, K Honda pen 82)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,453. **Ref:** Torky (Irn)
Syria: Balhous - Abduldaim, A Dyab, Ismail, Sabagh, Deka, Al Hussien (Al Agha 77), Al Husein, Ayan, Aouad (Al Khatib 46), Al Zino (Malki 64).
Sent off: Sabagh 90+5min.
Japan: Kawashima - Konno, Nagatomo, Uchida, Yoshida, Endo, Matsui (Hosogai 90+2), Hasebe, K Honda, Kagawa (Okazaki 65), Maeda (Nishikawa 75). *Sent off: Kawashima 72min.*

Jan 17 - Al Rayyan
Saudi Arabia 0
Japan 5 (Okazaki 8, 13, 80, Maeda 19, 51)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 2,022. **Ref:** Irmatov (Uzb)
Saudi Arabia: Abdullah - Shuhail, Hawsawi, Al Harbi, Al Mousa, Ateef, Al Shalhoub, Autef (Aboshgair 28), Al Jassam, Hazazi (Al Mosa 46), Al Qahtani.
Japan: Nishikawa - Konno, Nagatomo, Uchida (Inoha 46), Yoshida (Iwamasa 63), Endo (T Honda 87), Kashiwagi, Hasebe, Okazaki, Kagawa, Maeda.

Jan 17 - Doha
Jordan 2 (A Dyab og 30, Al Saify 59)
Syria 1 (Al Zino 15)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 9,849. **Ref:** Mohammed (Qat)
Jordan: Shafi - Monir, Al Salman, B Bani Yaseen, Abu-Hashhash, Fathi, Abdelrahman, Amer Deeb, Abdel-Fattah (Abdelhalim 88), Al Saify (Hijah 90+2), Abdallah Deeb (Abukeshek 62).
Syria: Balhous - Abduldaim (Habib 78), A Dyab (Al Khatib 63), Ismail, Deka, Al Hussien, Al Husein, Ayan, Aouad (Chanko 63), Al Zino, Malki.

ASIAN CUP – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Japan	3	2	1	0	8	2	7
Jordan	3	2	1	0	4	2	7
Syria	3	1	0	2	4	5	3
Saudi Arabia	3	0	0	3	1	8	0

Group C

Jan 10 - Doha
India 0
Australia 4 (Cahill 12, 65, Kewell 25, Holman 45+2)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 9,783. **Ref:** Al Badwawi (UAE)
India: Pal - Anwar Ali, Mandal, S Singh, Pradeep (Wadoo 61), Gouramangi Singh, Lawrence, Dias (R Singh 79), Chhetri, Rafi (Yadav 63), Nabi.
Australia: Schwarzer - Neill, Carney, Ognenovski, Wilkshire, Culina, Emerton (Burns 77), Kewell (McDonald 72), Holman, Jedinak (McKay 62), Cahill.

Jan 10 - Doha
South Korea 2 (Koo Ja-cheol 40, 52)
Bahrain 1 (Aaish pen 86)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,669. **Ref:** Al Hilali (Oma)
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Kwak Tae-hwi, Lee Young-pyo, Lee Jung-soo, Cha Du-ri, Lee Yong-rae, Park Ji-sung, Koo Ja-cheol, Ki Sung-yong, Lee Chung-yong, Ji Dong-won (Son Heung-min 68; Cho Yong-hyung 85).
Sent off: Kwak Tae-hwi 85min.
Bahrain: Mansoor - Al Hooti, Marzooqi, Baba (Rakea 12), Meshkhas, Fatadi, Aaish, Abdulrahman (Ayyad 69), Omar, John, Abdullatif (Al Dakeel 79).

Jan 14 - Doha
Australia 1 (Jedinak 62)
South Korea 1 (Koo Ja-cheol 24)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,526. **Ref:** Mohammed (Qat)
Australia: Schwarzer - Neill, Carney, Ognenovski, Wilkshire (North 68), Culina (Valeri 46), Emerton, Kewell, Holman (McKay 89), Jedinak, Cahill.
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Hwang Jae-won, Lee Young-pyo, Lee Jung-soo, Cha Du-ri, Lee Yong-rae, Park Ji-sung, Koo Ja-cheol (Yeom Ki-hun 67), Ki Sung-yong, Lee Chung-yong, Ji Dong-won (Yoo Byung-soo 67; Yoon Bit-garam 89).

Jan 14 - Doha
Bahrain 5 (Aaish pen 8, Abdullatif 16, 20, 35, 77)
India 2 (Gouramangi Singh 10, Chhetri 53)
HT: 4-1. **Att:** 11,032. **Ref:** Mohd Salleh (Mly)
Bahrain: Mansoor - Marzooqi, Meshkhas, Rakea, Aaish, Isa, Omar, Ali, John (Fatadi 78), Abdullatif (Saad 83), Al Dakeel (Abdulrahman 67).
Sent off: Aaish 62min.
India: Pal - Anwar Ali, S Singh, Pradeep (Mandal 74), R Singh (Wadoo 74), Gouramangi Singh, Lawrence, Dias, Yadav, Chhetri, Nabi.

Jan 18 - Doha
South Korea 4 (Ji Dong-won 6, 23, Koo Ja-cheol 9, Son Heung-min 81)
India 1 (Chhetri pen 12)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 11,366. **Ref:** Al Ghamdi (Sau)
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Hwang Jae-won, Kwak Tae-hwi, Lee Young-pyo, Cha Du-ri (Choi Hyo-jin 46), Lee Yong-rae, Park Ji-sung (Yoon Bit-garam 76), Koo Ja-cheol, Ki Sung-yong (Son Heung-min 46), Lee Chung-yong, Ji Dong-won.
India: Pal - Anwar Ali, S Singh, Pradeep (Wadoo 56), R Singh (Mandal 5), Gouramangi Singh, Lawrence, Dias, Yadav (Bhutia 78), Chhetri, Nabi.

Jan 18 - Doha
Australia 1 (Jedinak 37)
Bahrain 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 3,919. **Ref:** Nishimura (Jap)
Australia: Schwarzer - Neill, Ognenovski, North (Kilkenny 80), Emerton, Kewell (McDonald 76), Holman, Jedinak, Valeri, McKay, Cahill (Kruse 90).
Bahrain: Mansoor - Marzooqi, Meshkhas, Fatadi, Rakea, Abdulrahman (Al Hooti 55), Isa (Al Malood 90), Omar, Ali, John (Al Dakeel 66), Abdullatif.

ASIAN CUP – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Australia	3	2	1	0	6	1	7
South Korea	3	2	1	0	7	3	7
Bahrain	3	1	0	2	6	5	3
India	3	0	0	3	3	13	0

Group D

Jan 11 - Doha
North Korea 0
United Arab Emirates 0
Att: 3,639. **Ref:** Mohd Salleh (Mly)
North Korea: Ri Myong-guk - Cha Jong-hyok, Pak Nam-chol (D), Ri Kwang-chon, Jon Kwang-ik, Pak Nam-chol (M) (Choe Myong-ho 79), Ryang Yong-gi, An Yong-hak, Kim Kuk-jin, Jong Tae-se (Pak Chol-min 83), Hong Yong-jo (An Chol-hyok 48).
UAE: Naser - Sebil, Al Kamali, Abbas, Jaber, Khater, A Abdulrahman, Al Wehaibi (Al Shehhi 90), Al Hammadi, Matar (O Abdulrahman 90+2), Khalil (Al Kathiri 77).

EGYPT

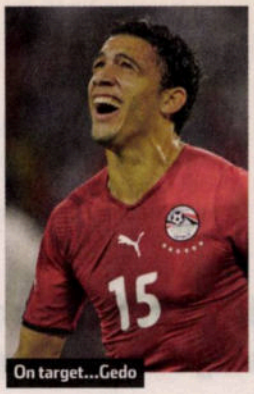
New cup is a success

The host nation won the inaugural Nile Basin Tournament, beating Uganda 3-1 in the Final in Cairo.

Al Sayed Hamdy, who plays his club football for Egyptian side Petrojet, was the competition's top scorer with six goals, two of which came in the Final.

Gedo scored Egypt's third before Cesar Uguhti scored a consolation for Uganda from the penalty spot.

Samir Zaher, president of the Egyptian Football Association, has said that the competition, which was contested by the countries that share the Nile waters, will now become an annual event and that his federation will offer financial support to any other nation that wishes to host it in the future.



On target...Gedo

EL SALVADOR

Reward for Rugamas

Interim national coach Jose Luis Rugamas has been given a six-month contract extension after leading the country through to the Gold Cup in June.

Rugamas' side qualified for this summer's tournament in the USA by finishing in fourth place in the Central American Cup.

Qualified...Rugamas

Jan 11 - Al Rayyan
Iraq 1 (Mahmoud 13)
Iran 2 (Rezaei 42, Mobali 84)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 10,478. **Ref:** Irmatov (Uzb)
Iraq: Gassid - Shakir (Ibrahim 46), Rehema, Samal Saeed, Munir (Mustafa Kareem 88), Akram, Mohammed, Mahdi Kareem, Mohammad (Samer Saeed 82), Mahmoud, Abdulzahra.
Iran: Rahmati - Hosseini, Aghili, Hajsafi, Nosrati, Nekounam, Teymourian, Mobali (P Nouri 87), Rezaei, Shojaei (Khalatbari 69), Gholami (Ansarifard 83).

Jan 15 - Doha
Iran 1 (Ansarifard 63)
North Korea 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,488. **Ref:** Shukralla (Bhn)
Iran: Rahmati - Heydari, Hosseini, Aghili, Hajsafi, Nosrati (Rezaei 61), Nekounam, P Nouri, Mobali (M Nouri 46), Khalatbari, Ansarifard (Gholami 90+1).
North Korea: Ri Myong-guk - Cha Jong-hyok, Ri Jun-il, Ri Kwang-chon, Jon Kwang-ik, Pak Nam-chol (M), Mun In-guk (Ryang Yong-gi 61), An Yong-hak, Kim Kuk-jin, Jong Tae-se (Pak Chol-min 65), Hong Yong-jo.

Jan 15 - Al Rayyan
United Arab Emirates 0
Iraq 1 (Abbas og 90+3)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 7,233. **Ref:** Nishimura (Jap)
UAE: Naser - Sebil, Al Kamali, Abbas, Jaber, Khater (Mubarak 84), A Abdulrahman, Al Wehaibi (Khamis 74), Al Hammadi, Matar, Khalil (Alkas 68).
Iraq: Gassid - Rehema, Samal Saeed, Ibrahim, Munir, Akram, Mohammed (Abbas 64), Mahdi Kareem, Mohammad (Jassim 61), Mahmoud, Abdulzahra (Mustafa Kareem 74).

Jan 19 - Al Rayyan
Iraq 1 (Jassim 22)
North Korea 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,111. **Ref:** Mohd Salleh (Mly)
Iraq: Gassid - Abbas, Rehema, Samal Saeed, Ibrahim, Munir, Akram, Jassim (Mohammed 77), Mahdi Kareem, Mustafa Kareem (Abdulzahra 73), Mahmoud (Khalid 90+4).
North Korea: Ri Myong-guk - Cha Jong-hyok, Ri Jun-il (Pak Nam-chol (D) 48), Ri Kwang-chon, Jon Kwang-ik, Pak Nam-chol (M), Ryang Yong-gi, An Yong-hak, Kim Kuk-jin (Mun In-guk 70), Jong Tae-se, Hong Yong-jo.

Jan 19 - Doha
United Arab Emirates 0
Iran 3 (Afshin 67, M Nouri 83, Abbas og 90+3)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,012. **Ref:** Kim (SKo)
UAE: Naser - Sebil, Al Kamali, Abbas, Jaber, Khater, A Abdulrahman (Al Shehhi 64), Al Wehaibi (O Abdulrahman 53), Al Hammadi, Matar, Khalil (Al Kathiri 75). *Sent off: Sebil 79min.*
Iran: Gordan - Heydari, Talebi, Hajsafi (Nosrati 59), Bengar, Teymourian, Hadadifar, M Nouri, Shojaei (Rezaei 46), Gholami (Norozi 84), Afshin.
Sent off: Afshin 75min.

ASIAN CUP – GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran	3	3	0	0	6	1	9
Iraq	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
North Korea	3	0	1	2	0	2	1
UAE	3	0	1	2	0	4	1

Top two in each group qualified for quarter-finals

Quarter-finals

Jan 21 - Doha
Japan 3 (Kagawa 29, 71, Inoha 90)
Qatar 2 (Soria 13, Fabio Cesar 63)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 19,479. **Ref:** Mohd Salleh (Mly)
Japan: Kawashima - Inoha, Konno, Nagatomo, Yoshida, Endo, Hasebe, K Honda, Okazaki, Kagawa (Nagata 90+3), Maeda (Iwamasa 64).
Sent off: Yoshida 63min.
Qatar: Burhan - Ismaeil, Mohammed, Al Hamad (Al Marri 90+2), Majed (Muftah 14), Al Ghanim, Lawrence, Rizik, Ahmed, El Sayed (Fabio Cesar 59), Soria.

Jan 21 - Doha
Uzbekistan 2 (Bakaev 47, 49)
Jordan 1 (B Bani Yaseen 58)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 16,073. **Ref:** Malik (Sin)
Uzbekistan: Nesterov (T Juraev 62) - Akhmedov, Mulladjanov, S Juraev, Haydarov, Djeparov, Kapadze, Khasanov (Andreev 57), Bakaev, Geynrikh (Ismailov 70), Tursunov.
Jordan: Shafi - Monir, Al Salman, Al Dmeiri, B Bani Yaseen, Abu-Hashhash (Abdallah Deeb 64), Abdelrahman, Amer Deeb, Abdel-Fattah, Abdelhalim, Abukeshek (Hijah 76).

Jan 22 - Doha
Australia 1 (Kewell 118)
Iraq 0
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 0-0. **Att:** 7,889.
Ref: Mohammed (Qat)
Australia: Schwarzer - Neill, Carney (Kilkenny 109), Ognenovski, Wilkshire, Kewell, Holman (Burns 102), Jedinak, Valeri, McKay, Cahill (McDonald 90+2).
Iraq: Gassid - Abbas, Shakir (Ibrahim 75), Rehema, Samal Saeed, Munir, Akram, Mohammed (Abdulzahra 86), Mahdi Kareem (Mustafa Kareem 63), Mohammad, Mahmoud.

Jan 22 - Doha
Iran 0
South Korea 1 (Yoon Bit-garam 105)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 0-0. **Att:** 7,111.
Ref: Irmatov (Uzb)
Iran: Rahmati - Hosseini, Aghili, Hajsafi, Nosrati (Heydari 46), Nekounam, Teymourian, P Nouri (Gholami 109), Rezaei, Khalatbari, Ansarifard (Shojaei 75).
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Hwang Jae-won, Lee Young-pyo, Lee Jung-soo, Cha Du-ri, Lee Yong-rae, Park Ji-sung (Yeom Ki-hun 117), Koo Ja-cheol (Yoon Bit-garam 81), Ki Sung-yong (Hong Jeong-ho 111), Lee Chung-yong, Ji Dong-won.

Semi-finals

Jan 25 - Doha
Japan 2 (Maeda 36, Hosogai 97)
South Korea 2 (Ki Sung-yong pen 23, Hwang Jae-won 120)
Aet. **HT:** 1-1. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 16,171.
Ref: Al Ghamdi (Sau)
Japan 3-0 on pens
Japan: Kawashima - Iwamasa, Konno, Nagatomo, Uchida, Endo, Hasebe (T Honda 117), K Honda, Okazaki, Kagawa (Hosogai 87), Maeda (Inoha 105).
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Hwang Jae-won, Cho Yong-hyung (Kim Shin-wook 103), Lee Young-pyo, Cha Du-ri, Lee Yong-rae, Park Ji-sung, Koo Ja-cheol, Ki Sung-yong, Lee Chung-yong (Son Heung-min 82), Ji Dong-won (Hong Jeong-ho 66).

Jan 25 - Doha
Uzbekistan 0
Australia 6 (Kewell 5, Ognenovski 35, Carney 65, Emerton 73, Valeri 82, Kruse 83)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 24,826. **Ref:** Al Badwawi (UAE)
Uzbekistan: T Juraev - Ismailov, S Juraev, Haydarov, Djeparov, Akhmedov, Kapadze, Khasanov (Bikmaev 55), Karpenko (Ibragimov 71), Bakaev, Shatskikh (Tursunov 59). *Sent off: Bakaev 67min.*
Australia: Schwarzer - Neill, Carney, Ognenovski, Wilkshire, Kewell (Kruse 53), Holman (Emerton 61), Jedinak, Valeri, McKay, Cahill (Kilkenny 71).

Third-place play-off

Jan 28 - Doha
Uzbekistan 2 (Geynrikh pen 45, 53)
South Korea 3 (Koo Ja-cheol 18, Ji Dong-won 28, 39)
HT: 1-3. **Att:** 8,199. **Ref:** Malik (Sin)
Uzbekistan: Nesterov - Mulladjanov, Akhmedov, Haydarov, Andreev, Djeparov, Kapadze, Karpenko (Khasanov 87), Novkarov (Salomov 77), Geynrikh, Tursunov.
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Hwang Jae-won, Lee Young-pyo, Lee Jung-soo, Hong Jeong-ho (Kwak Tae-hwi 78), Cha Du-ri, Lee Yong-rae, Koo Ja-cheol (Yoon Bit-garam 53), Ki Sung-yong, Lee Chung-yong (Son Heung-min 60), Ji Dong-won.

Final

Jan 29 - Doha
Australia 0
Japan 1 (Lee 109)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 0-0. **Att:** 37,174.
Ref: Irmatov (Uzb)
Australia: Schwarzer - Neill, Carney, Ognenovski, Wilkshire, Kewell (Kruse 103), Holman (Emerton 65), Jedinak, Valeri, McKay, Cahill (Kilkenny 109).
Japan: Kawashima - Konno, Nagatomo, Uchida (Inoha 120), Yoshida, Endo, Fujimoto (Iwamasa 56), Hasebe, K Honda, Okazaki, Maeda (Lee 98).

● *Asian Cup squads on pages 112-113*

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1956	South Korea
1960	South Korea
1964	Israel
1968	Iran
1972	Iran
1976	Iran
1980	Kuwait
1984	Saudi Arabia
1988	Saudi Arabia
1992	Japan
1996	Saudi Arabia
2000	Japan
2004	Japan
2007	Iraq

CENTRAL AMERICAN CUP

In Panama City

Group A

Jan 14
El Salvador 2 (J Alas 71, Burgos 76)
Nicaragua 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Quesada (CR)
El Salvador: Portillo - Anaya, Marvin Gonzalez, Turcios, Garcia, R Hernandez (Umanzor 41), Romero, A Flores (E Sanchez 58), J Alas (D Alas 76), Alvarez, Burgos.
Nicaragua: Espinoza - D Solorzano, Zeledon, Quijano (Tellez 73), Busto, Barrera, Rodriguez, Villanueva (Figueroa 46), Eugarrios, Wilson (Sanchez 79), Calero.

Jan 14
Panama 2 (Aguilar 21, Brown 28)
Belize 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Pineda (Hnd)
Panama: Penedo - R Torres, Machado, Davis, G Gomez (A Henriquez 62), Buitrago, Cooper, Bonaga, Cedeno, Brown (Renteria 70), Aguilar (Sanchez 83).
Belize: Moody-Orio - Trapp, Eiley, Morales, Haylock (Mendez 86), Smith, Kuylen, Simpson (Gaynair 46), D Jimenez, O Jimenez (Benavides 72), McCauley.

Jan 16
Belize 2 (Smith pen 45, O Jimenez 76)
El Salvador 5 (Romero 15, Burgos 24, 46, J Alas 54, Umanzor 59)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Cerdas (CR)
Belize: Moody-Orio - Trapp (Benavides 83), Gaynair, Eiley, Morales, Haylock (Mendez 59), Smith, Kuylen, Simpson (O Jimenez 46), D Jimenez, McCaulay.
El Salvador: Portillo - Anaya, Marvin Gonzalez, Umanzor, Turcios, Garcia, Romero (E Sanchez 71), Baires, J Alas (Sosa 63), Alvarez (A Flores 51), Burgos.

Jan 16
Panama 2 (Cooper 17, Renteria 80)
Nicaragua 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 7,747. **Ref:** Lopez (Gtm)
Panama: Penedo - R Torres, Machado, Davis (Cummings 75), Buitrago, A Henriquez, Cooper, Bonaga (G Torres 68), Cedeno, Renteria, Brown (Sanchez 83).
Nicaragua: Espinoza - D Solorzano, Zeledon (Sanchez 74), Tellez, Quijano, Barrera, Rodriguez (Villanueva 65), Eugarrios, Leguias, Wilson (Garth 82), Calero.

Jan 18
Nicaragua 1 (Espinoza pen 10)
Belize 1 (D Jimenez 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Brea (Cub)
Nicaragua: Espinoza - D Solorzano, Gutierrez (Zeledon 62), Quijano, Busto, Barrera (Sanchez 56), Eugarrios, Figueroa, Leguias (Rodriguez 77), Wilson, Calero. *Sent off: Wilson 19min.*
Belize: West - Mendez, Eiley, Morales, Haylock (O Jimenez 46), Smith, Kuylen, Castillo (D Jimenez 46), Simpson (August 63), Benavides, McCaulay.

Visitors...Ghana

ENGLAND

Ghana to visit Wembley

Fabio Capello's side will face Ghana for the first time in a senior international when they meet in a friendly at Wembley on March 29.

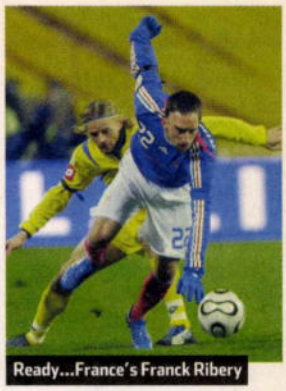
The game will be staged three days after England have played their first Euro 2012 qualifier of the year, against Wales at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff.

Meanwhile, the FA has held talks about reviving the British Home Championship – with Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – as a one-off in 2013.

FRANCE

Euro friendlies

Les Bleus have confirmed three friendlies: at home to Croatia at the Stade de France on March 29, and away to Euro 2012 hosts Ukraine and Poland on June 6 and 9 respectively.


Ready...France's Franck Ribery

3 people who died in Iraq due to celebratory gunfire following the Asian Cup win over UAE

Jan 18
Panama 2 (Aguilar 25, Cooper 79)
El Salvador 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Garcia Orozco (Mex)
Panama: Melgar - R Torres (Baloy 75), Machado, Cummings, G Gomez, Sanchez (Cooper 77), Cedeno, Haywood, Renteria, Aguilar (B Perez 68), G Torres.
El Salvador: Portillo - Henriquez, Marvin Gonzalez, Umanzor, Turcios (Burgos 75), Garcia, D Alas, Romero (Baires 85), J Alas, Alvarez (A Flores 77), Blanco.

CENTRAL AMERICAN CUP – GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Panama	3	3	0	0	6	0	9
El Salvador	3	2	0	1	7	4	6
Nicaragua	3	0	1	2	1	5	1
Belize	3	0	1	2	3	8	1

Group B

Jan 14
Costa Rica 1 (V Nunez 42)
Honduras 1 (R Nunez 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Garcia Orozco (Mex)
Costa Rica: Grant - Miller, Myrie, Marshall, Delgado, Gamboa, Borges, Guzman (Guevara 46), Brenes (Cubero 66), Elizondo (Urena 77), V Nunez.
Honduras: N Valladares - O Garcia (O Chavez 74), Sabillon, J Garcia, Jhony Palacios, Leveron, Claros, Mejia, E Martinez, W Martinez (R Nunez 60), L Ramirez (Welcome 54).

Jan 16
Guatemala 0
Costa Rica 2 (Urena 48, 82)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Moreno (Pan)
Guatemala: Molina - G Cabrera, Flores (G Ruiz 57), Gallardo, Noriega, Vides, Iboy (Montepeque 71), Ramirez, Velasquez, Leon (Figueroa 46), C Ruiz.
Costa Rica: Grant - Miller, Myrie, Marshall, Delgado, Leal (Cubero 65), Gamboa (Mora 46), Borges, Brenes, Urena, V Nunez (Guevara 70).

Jan 18
Honduras 3 (R Nunez 13, Claros 42, 89)
Guatemala 1 (Ramirez 24)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Aguilar (ESv)
Honduras: N Valladares - Sabillon, J Garcia, Norales (M Chavez 59), Leveron, R Nunez, Claros, M Martinez (O Chavez 59), Mejia, E Martinez (Lopez 82), Welcome.
Guatemala: Molina - G Cabrera, Flores, Gallardo, Noriega, Vides (Castellanos 46), Figueroa, Ramirez, Velasquez, Leon (G Ruiz 46; Ciani 70), C Ruiz.

CENTRAL AMERICAN CUP – GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Honduras	2	1	1	0	4	2	4
Costa Rica	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Guatemala	2	0	0	2	1	5	0

Top two in both groups qualified for semi-finals; the two third-placed teams entered fifth-place play-off

Fifth-place play-off

Jan 21
Nicaragua 1 (Rodriguez 24)
Guatemala 2 (G Ruiz 45, Leon 66)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Garcia Orozco (Mex)
Nicaragua: Espinoza - D Solorzano, Zeledon (Busto 75), Tellez, Quijano, Barrera, Rodriguez (Figueroa 58), Eugarrios, Leguias, Calero, Lazo (Villanueva 75).
Guatemala: Paredes - G Cabrera, Flores, Noriega, Figueroa, Ramirez (E Gonzalez 61), Velasquez, Ciani (G Ruiz 24; Murga 61), Leon, C Ruiz, Montepeque.

Semi-finals

Jan 21
Honduras 2 (Leveron 78, M Chavez 90)
El Salvador 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Quesada (CR)
Honduras: N Valladares - O Garcia, Sabillon, J Garcia, O Chavez, Leveron, Claros, Mejia, Lopez (M Martinez 72), E Martinez (M Chavez 62), L Ramirez (W Martinez 55).
El Salvador: Portillo - Anaya, Marvin Gonzalez, Umanzor, Turcios, Molina, D Alas (Baires 72), Romero, J Alas, Alvarez (A Flores 58), Burgos (Blanco 75).

Jan 21
Panama 1 (B Perez 76)
Costa Rica 1 (Borges 67)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Aguilar (ESv)
Costa Rica 4-2 on pens (no extra-time)
Panama: Penedo - Baloy, R Torres, Machado, Davis (G Torres 69), G Gomez, A Henriquez, Cooper, Cedeno, Renteria (Aguilar 82), B Perez.
Costa Rica: Grant - Miller, Myrie (Mora 59), Marshall, Delgado, Borges, Cubero, Brenes (Guevara 65), Elizondo (Gamboa 80), Urena, V Nunez.

Third-place play-off

Jan 23
El Salvador 0
Panama 0
Att: 2,000. **Ref:** Pineda (Hnd)
Panama 5-4 on pens (no extra-time)
El Salvador: Portillo - Anaya, Marvin Gonzalez, Umanzor, Turcios, Garcia, D Alas, Romero (Baires 58), A Flores (Alvarez 71), J Alas, Burgos (Blanco 90).
Panama: Penedo - Baloy, R Torres, Machado (Davis 23), Cummings, G Gomez (Bonaga 66), A Henriquez, Cooper, Brown, B Perez (Renteria 83), G Torres.

Final

Jan 23
Honduras 2 (W Martinez 8, E Martinez 52)
Costa Rica 1 (Urena 73)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Lopez (Gtm)
Honduras: N Valladares - Sabillon (Jhony Palacios 78), J Garcia, O Chavez, Leveron, R Nunez (Acevedo 46), Claros, M Martinez, Mejia, E Martinez (M Chavez 63), W Martinez.
Costa Rica: Grant - Miller, Myrie, Mora, Marshall, Delgado, Borges, Guevara (Elizondo 46), Cubero (Brenes 54), J Martinez (Gamboa 66), Urena.
Sent off: Delgado 62min.

All the semi-finalists and Guatemala, the fifth-placed team, qualify for this year's CONCACAF Gold Cup

PREVIOUS WINNERS*

1991	Costa Rica
1993	Honduras
1995	Honduras
1997	Costa Rica
1999	Costa Rica
2001	Guatemala
2003	Costa Rica
2005	Costa Rica
2007	Costa Rica
2009	Panama

**Known as the UNCAF Cup until this year's tournament*

CONCACAF GOLD CUP

The full list of qualifiers

Canada*
Costa Rica**
Cuba***
El Salvador**
Grenada***
Guadeloupe***
Guatemala**
Honduras**
Jamaica***
Mexico*
Panama**
United States*

**Qualified automatically*
***Qualified via Central American Cup*
****Qualified via Caribbean Championship*

The Gold Cup will be staged in the United States from June 5 to 25, 2011

NILE BASIN TOURNAMENT

In Egypt

Group A

Jan 5 - Cairo
Uganda 3 (Kaweesa 33, Ssemakula 55, Kasule 89)
Burundi 1 (Habarugira 39)
HT: 1-1

Jan 5 - Cairo
Egypt 5 (Hamdi 4, 57, Aboutraika 12, Haroub og 24, A Ali 78)
Tanzania 1 (Gumbo 82)
HT: 3-0
Egypt: El Sayed (Sobhi) - Fathi, Naguib, Gomaa, Farag, El Solayya (Abd Rabou), Salah (El Shahhat), Shikabala (Geddo), Aboutraika (Soliman), Belal (Ali), Hamdi.

Jan 8 - Cairo
Tanzania 1 (Nsajigwa pen 76)
Burundi 1 (Hamisi 49)
HT: 0-0

Jan 8 - Cairo
Egypt 1 (Geddo 90+3)
Uganda 0
HT: 0-0
Egypt: El Sayed - Fathi, Fathalla, Naguib (Gomaa), Farag (Abdelshafy), Abd Rabou, Salah, El Shahhat (Soliman), Aboutraika (Eid), Hamdi (Geddo), Belal (Ali).

Jan 11 - Cairo
Uganda 1 (Mugalu 64)
Tanzania 1 (Machupa 24)
HT: 0-1

Jan 11 - Ismailia
Egypt 3 (Geddo 1, Ali 10, Hamdi 80)
Burundi 0
HT: 2-0
Egypt: Sobhi - Fathi, Fathalla, Gomaa (Hazem), Farag (Soliman), El Solayya, Ghali (Abd Rabou), Eid (Shikabala), El Said (Aboutraika), Geddo (Hamdi), Ali.

NILE BASIN TOURNAMENT – GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Egypt	3	3	0	0	9	1	9
Uganda	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Tanzania	3	0	2	1	3	7	2
Burundi	3	0	1	2	2	7	1

Group B

Jan 5 - Cairo
Kenya 1 (Okoth pen 19)
Sudan 0
HT: 1-0

Jan 8 - Cairo
DR Congo 1 (Bongeli pen 28)
Kenya 0
HT: 1-0

Jan 11 - Cairo
DR Congo 2 (Salakiaku 33, Bongeli pen 90+3)
Sudan 1 (El Tahir 71)
HT: 1-0

NILE BASIN TOURNAMENT – GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
DR Congo	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Kenya	2	1	0	1	1	1	3
Sudan	2	0	0	2	1	3	0

Top two in both groups qualified for semi-finals; the two third-placed teams entered fifth-place play-off

Semi-finals

Jan 14 - Cairo
DR Congo 0
Uganda 1 (Kavuma 23)
HT: 0-1

Jan 14 - Cairo
Egypt 5 (Belal 13, 68, 90, Hamdi 22, Gomaa 25)
Kenya 1 (Opondo 67)
HT: 3-0
Egypt: El Sayed - Fathi, Fathalla (Naguib), Gomaa, Farag (Soliman), Salah (Abd Rabou), El Solayya (Ghali), Aboutraika, Shikabala (Eid), Hamdi (Geddo), Belal.

Fifth-place play-off

Jan 16 - Cairo
Tanzania 0
Sudan 2 (Mustafa 51, Yousif 58)
HT: 0-0

Third-place play-off

Jan 17 - Cairo
DR Congo 1 (Kasongo 33)
Kenya 0
HT: 1-0

Final

Jan 17 - Cairo
Egypt 3 (Hamdi 37, 70, Geddo 81)
Uganda 1 (Okhuti pen 84)
HT: 1-0
Egypt: El Sayed (Sobhi) - Fathi (Abd Rabou), Fathalla, Gomaa (Naguib), Farag, El Solayya, Ghali, Shikabala (Eid), Aboutraika (Soliman), Hamdi, Belal (Geddo).

Confirmed...Sichinava

£6.3m bonus Iraq's players are believed to have received for beating UAE

GEORGIA

President appointed

Zviad Sichinava has been elected as full-time president of the Georgian Football Federation for the next four years. He had held the post on an interim basis since October 2009.

GHANA

Another Serb coach

Goran Stevanovic, who led Partizan Belgrade to the Serbian league championship last season, has been appointed coach of Ghana's national team.

The 44-year-old, who spent three years as assistant coach to the former Serbia & Montenegro national side, takes over from fellow Serb Milovan Rajevac, who quit after leading the country to the quarter-finals of last year's World Cup and signed a new contract with Saudi Arabian club Al Ahli.

New man...Stevanovic

FRIENDLIES

Thursday, December 30

Dec 30 - Abu Dhabi, UAE
Syria 0
South Korea 1 (Ji Dong-won 82)
HT: 0-0
Syria: Balhous - Abduldaim, A Dyab, Ismail (Malki 88), Al Hussien (Habib 75), Al Husein (Abdullah 85), Al Khatib, Al Zino (Ayan 59), Sabagh, Deka, Aouad (Al Agha 59).
South Korea: Jung Sung-ryong - Choi Hyo-jin (Kwak Tae-hwi 86), Cho Yong-hyung, Lee Jung-soo, Lee Young-pyo, Ki Sung-yong (Koo Ja-cheol 68), Lee Yong-rae, Lee Chung-yong (Yoo Byung-soo 71), Kim Bo-kyung (Son Heung-min 46), Park Ji-sung, Kim Shin-wook (Ji Dong-won 46).

Friday, December 31

Dec 31 - Manama
Bahrain 0
Saudi Arabia 1 (Hawsawi 66)
HT: 0-0

Dec 31 - Suez, Egypt
Kuwait 4 (Al Sulaiman 19, Al Enezi 21, 33, Al Mutwa 25)
Zambia 0
HT: 4-0

Dec 31 - Doha
Qatar 0
North Korea 1 (Ryang Yong-gi pen 70)
HT: 0-0

Sunday, January 2

Jan 2 - Al Rayyan, Qatar
Iran 1 (Nekounam 90+2)
Angola 0
HT: 0-0
Iran: Rahmati - Hosseini, Aghili, Heydari, Teymourian (Mobali 46), Nekounam, P Nouri (M Nouri 46), Shojaei (Afshin 78), Hajsafi, Ansarifard (Gholami 46), Rezaei (Khalatbari 46).

Jan 2 - Doha, Qatar
Iraq 2 (Mahmoud 19, 45)
China 3 (Hao Junmin 4, Zhao Peng pen 68, Deng Zhuoxiang 76)
HT: 2-1
Iraq: Gassid - Abbas (Mahdi Kareem 46), Samal Saeed (Ali Karim 46), Shakir, Rehema, Mohammed (Ayad 78), Akram (Khalid 78), Munir (Abdulameer 78), Mahmoud (Mustafa Kareem 46), Mohammad (Samer Saeed 78), Abdulzahra (Jassim 46).
Sent off: Mustafa Kareem 90min.
China: Zeng Cheng (Yang Zhi 46) - Li Jianbin (Zhang Linpeng 46), Liu Jianye (Rong Hao 46), Wang Qiang (Du Wei 46), Li Xuepeng (Zhao Peng 46), Zhou Haibin (Zhao Xuri 46), Huang Bowen (Deng Zhuoxiang 46), Wang Song (Yu Hai 46), Yu Tao (Yang Hao 46), Hao Junmin (Qu Bo 46), Gao Lin (Yang Xu 46).

Jan 2 - Dubai, UAE
Jordan 2 (Amer Deeb 32, Al Saify 75)
Uzbekistan 2 (Khasanov 70, Novkarov 77)
HT: 1-0
Jordan: Shafi - B Bani Yaseen, A Bani Yaseen (Abu-Hashhash 46), Aqel, Fathi, Amer Deeb, Abdelrahman, Abdel-Fattah (Al Daradour 81), Al Bashir (Al Salman 46), Al Saify, Abdallah Deeb (Abdelhalim 74).
Uzbekistan: Nesterov - Ismailov, S Juraev, Haydarov, Djeparov (Novkarov 70), Kapadze, Akhmedov, Karpenko (Tursunov 65), Khasanov, Shatskikh, Geynrikh.

Jan 2 - Al Ain City
United Arab Emirates 2 (Al Kathiri 63, Awana 90)
Syria 0
HT: 0-0
UAE: Khaseif - Jaber (Mousa 46), Abbas (Juma 70), Sebil, Al Kamali, O Abdulrahman (Awana 46), Mubarak, A Abdulrahman (Fawzi 84), Al Shehhi (Matar 46), Al Hammadi, Khalil (Al Kathiri 62).
Syria: Balhous - Abduldaim (Sahiwni 68), A Dyab, Deka, Sabagh (Habib 83), Al Hussien (Al Agha 68), Ismail (Chanko 83), Ayan, Al Husein, Al Khatib (Aouad 83), Al Zino (Malki 61).

Tuesday, January 4

Jan 4 - Manama
Bahrain 0
North Korea 1 (An Choi-hyok 59)
HT: 0-0

Jan 4 - Dammam
Saudi Arabia 0
Angola 0

Wednesday, January 5

Jan 5 - Al Ain City
United Arab Emirates 0
Australia 0
Ref: Shaaban
UAE: Naser - Abbas, Juma (Sebil 86), Jaber, Al Kamali, Khamis, Abdulrahman, Khater (Gharib 86), Al Wehaibi (Al Hammadi 46), Matar (Al Shehhi 73), Khalil (Abdulaziz Hussain 46).
Australia: Jones (Coe 46) - Neill, Carney, Ognenovski, Wilkshire (North 46), Holman (Kilkenny 58), Jedinak (Oar 58), Valeri, McKay, McDonald (Kruse 58), Burns.

Wednesday, January 19

Jan 19 - Cape Town, South Africa
Botswana 1 (Mogorosi 47)
Sweden 2 (Gerndt 31, A Svensson 74)
HT: 0-1
Botswana: Maposa - Lethsolathebe, Ramohibidu (Disthupo 86), Ohilwe, Thuma, Nato, Moloi, Ramatlhakwane, Tshekiso (Koko 62), Mogorosi (Zikhale 82), Motlhabankwe.
Sweden: Par Hansson - A Johansson, Almeback, Backman, Bengtsson, Eriksson, A Svensson, Molins (Hamad 72), Jonsson (D Larsson 72), Hysen, Gerndt (Gerzic 82).

Saturday, January 22

Jan 22 - Carson
United States 1 (Bunbury pen 75)
Chile 1 (Paredes 53)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,580. **Ref:** Gutierrez (Mex)
United States: Rimando (S Johnson 46) - Franklin, Ream, Gonzalez (Wynne 46), Loyd (Wallace 73), Larentowicz, McCarty, Bedoya (Alexander 83), Diskerud, Shea (Agudelo 60), Wondolowski (Bunbury 60).
Chile: Garces - Magalhaes, Toro, Mena, Abarca, Meneses, Silva, Figueroa (Seymour 46), Paredes, Puch, Gazale (Dominguez 71).

Monday, January 24

Jan 24 - Port Vila
Vanuatu 0
New Caledonia 0

FRIENDLY FIXTURES

Games announced so far for period February 12 to March 29, 2011

27.02.11 Pakistan v Palestine (Lahore)
02.03.11 Pakistan v Palestine (Karachi)
25.03.11 China v New Zealand (Nanning)
Estonia v Uruguay (Tallinn)
Finland v Bolivia (Antalya, Turkey)
Japan v Montenegro (Shizuoka)
Kuwait v Uzbekistan (Kuwait City)
Lithuania v Poland (Kaunas)
Qatar v Tunisia
South Korea v Colombia
26.03.11 Mexico v Paraguay (Oakland, USA)
Portugal v Chile (Lisbon)
United States v Argentina (East Rutherford)
29.03.11 China v Colombia
Costa Rica v Argentina (San Jose)
England v Ghana (London)
France v Croatia (Paris)
Germany v Australia (Monchengladbach)
Greece v Poland (Larissa)
Japan v New Zealand (Tokyo)
Kuwait v Palestine (Kuwait City)
Oman v Tunisia
Portugal v Finland (Aveiro)
Republic of Ireland v Uruguay (Dublin)
South Korea v Montenegro (Seoul)
United States v Paraguay (Nashville)

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS

Group A

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	4	4	0	0	13	1	12
Austria	3	2	1	0	9	4	7
Turkey	4	2	0	2	6	6	6
Belgium	4	1	1	2	8	8	4
Azerbaijan	3	1	0	2	2	9	3
Kazakhstan	4	0	0	4	0	10	0

03.09.10 Belgium v Germany 0-1
03.09.10 Kazakhstan v Turkey 0-3
07.09.10 Austria v Kazakhstan 2-0
07.09.10 Germany v Azerbaijan 6-1
07.09.10 Turkey v Belgium 3-2
08.10.10 Austria v Azerbaijan 3-0
08.10.10 Germany v Turkey 3-0
08.10.10 Kazakhstan v Belgium 0-2
12.10.10 Azerbaijan v Turkey 1-0
12.10.10 Belgium v Austria 4-4
12.10.10 Kazakhstan v Germany 0-3
25.03.11 Austria v Belgium
25.03.11 Germany v Kazakhstan
29.03.11 Belgium v Azerbaijan
29.03.11 Turkey v Austria
03.06.11 Austria v Germany
03.06.11 Belgium v Turkey
03.06.11 Kazakhstan v Azerbaijan
07.06.11 Azerbaijan v Germany
02.09.11 Azerbaijan v Belgium
02.09.11 Germany v Austria
02.09.11 Turkey v Kazakhstan
06.09.11 Austria v Turkey
06.09.11 Azerbaijan v Kazakhstan
07.10.11 Azerbaijan v Austria
07.10.11 Belgium v Kazakhstan
07.10.11 Turkey v Germany
11.10.11 Germany v Belgium
11.10.11 Kazakhstan v Austria
11.10.11 Turkey v Azerbaijan

Group B

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Russia	4	3	0	1	6	3	9
Rep Ireland	4	2	1	1	7	5	7
Armenia	4	2	1	1	9	4	7
Slovakia	4	2	1	1	4	4	7
Macedonia	4	1	1	2	4	4	4
Andorra	4	0	0	4	1	11	0

03.09.10 Andorra v Russia 0-2
03.09.10 Armenia v Rep of Ireland 0-1
03.09.10 Slovakia v Macedonia 1-0
07.09.10 Macedonia v Armenia 2-2
07.09.10 Rep of Ireland v Andorra 3-1
07.09.10 Russia v Slovakia 0-1
08.10.10 Andorra v Macedonia 0-2
08.10.10 Armenia v Slovakia 3-1
08.10.10 Rep of Ireland v Russia 2-3
12.10.10 Armenia v Andorra 4-0
12.10.10 Macedonia v Russia 0-1
12.10.10 Slovakia v Rep of Ireland 1-1
26.03.11 Andorra v Slovakia
26.03.11 Armenia v Russia
26.03.11 Rep of Ireland v Macedonia
04.06.11 Macedonia v Rep of Ireland
04.06.11 Russia v Armenia
04.06.11 Slovakia v Andorra
02.09.11 Andorra v Armenia
02.09.11 Rep of Ireland v Slovakia
02.09.11 Russia v Macedonia
06.09.11 Macedonia v Andorra
06.09.11 Russia v Rep of Ireland
06.09.11 Slovakia v Armenia
07.10.11 Andorra v Rep of Ireland
07.10.11 Armenia v Macedonia
07.10.11 Slovakia v Russia
11.10.11 Macedonia v Slovakia
11.10.11 Rep of Ireland v Armenia
11.10.11 Russia v Andorra

Group C

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	4	3	1	0	10	1	10
Slovenia	4	2	1	1	7	3	7
Estonia	4	2	0	2	6	5	6
N Ireland	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
Serbia	4	1	1	2	5	7	4
Faroe Islands	5	0	1	4	3	16	1

11.08.10 Estonia v Faroe Islands 2-1
03.09.10 Estonia v Italy 1-2
03.09.10 Faroe Islands v Serbia 0-3
03.09.10 Slovenia v N Ireland 0-1
07.09.10 Italy v Faroe Islands 5-0
07.09.10 Serbia v Slovenia 1-1
08.10.10 N Ireland v Italy 0-0
08.10.10 Serbia v Estonia 1-3
08.10.10 Slovenia v Faroe Islands 5-1
12.10.10 Estonia v Slovenia 0-1
12.10.10 Faroe Islands v N Ireland 1-1
12.10.10 Italy v Serbia ..... (awarded) 3-0
25.03.11 Serbia v N Ireland
25.03.11 Slovenia v Italy
29.03.11 Estonia v Serbia
29.03.11 N Ireland v Slovenia
03.06.11 Faroe Islands v Slovenia
03.06.11 Italy v Estonia
07.06.11 Faroe Islands v Estonia
10.08.11 N Ireland v Faroe Islands
02.09.11 Faroe Islands v Italy
02.09.11 N Ireland v Serbia
02.09.11 Slovenia v Estonia
06.09.11 Estonia v N Ireland

Winners...Honduras

HONDURAS

Gold Cup qualifiers

Honduras beat Costa Rica 2-1 in the Central American Cup Final. Walter Martinez and Emil Martinez were on target, with Marcos Urena replying for "the Ticos", who had Dario Delgado sent off.

Both countries qualified for June's CONCACAF Gold Cup, along with Panama, El Salvador and Guatemala.

ISRAEL

Starkovs' dual role

UEFA has announced that Israel will host the European Under-21 Championship finals in 2013.

MOROCCO

Nations Cup finals

The next African Nations Cup will be held in Morocco, in 2015, with the 2017 tournament being staged in South Africa.

PORTUGAL

Tiago calls it a day

Midfielder Tiago, who is currently on loan at Atletico Madrid from Juventus, announced his retirement from international football.

The 29-year-old won 58 caps for his country and scored three goals.

Finished...Tiago

06.09.11 Italy v Slovenia
06.09.11 Serbia v Faroe Islands
07.10.11 N Ireland v Estonia
07.10.11 Serbia v Italy
11.10.11 Italy v N Ireland
11.10.11 Slovenia v Serbia

Group D

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	4	3	0	1	6	1	9
Belarus	4	2	2	0	3	0	8
Albania	4	1	2	1	3	4	5
Bosnia-Herz	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Romania	3	0	2	1	1	3	2
Luxembourg	4	0	1	3	0	6	1

03.09.10 France v Belarus 0-1
03.09.10 Luxembourg v Bosnia-Herz 0-3
03.09.10 Romania v Albania 1-1
07.09.10 Albania v Luxembourg 1-0
07.09.10 Belarus v Romania 0-0
07.09.10 Bosnia-Herz v France 0-2
08.10.10 Albania v Bosnia-Herz 1-1
08.10.10 Luxembourg v Belarus 0-0
09.10.10 France v Romania 2-0
12.10.10 Belarus v Albania 2-0
12.10.10 France v Luxembourg 2-0
25.03.11 Luxembourg v France
26.03.11 Albania v Belarus
26.03.11 Bosnia-Herz v Romania
29.03.11 Romania v Luxembourg
03.06.11 Belarus v France
03.06.11 Romania v Bosnia-Herz
07.06.11 Belarus v Luxembourg
07.06.11 Bosnia-Herz v Albania
02.09.11 Albania v France
02.09.11 Belarus v Bosnia-Herz
02.09.11 Luxembourg v Romania
06.09.11 Bosnia-Herz v Belarus
06.09.11 Luxembourg v Albania
06.09.11 Romania v France
07.10.11 Bosnia-Herz v Luxembourg
07.10.11 France v Albania
07.10.11 Romania v Belarus
11.10.11 Albania v Romania
11.10.11 France v Bosnia-Herz

Group E

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP E	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Holland	4	4	0	0	12	2	12
Hungary	4	3	0	1	12	4	9
Sweden	3	2	0	1	9	4	6
Moldova	4	2	0	2	5	3	6
Finland	4	1	0	3	10	6	3
San Marino	5	0	0	5	0	29	0

03.09.10 Moldova v Finland 2-0
03.09.10 San Marino v Holland 0-5
03.09.10 Sweden v Hungary 2-0
07.09.10 Holland v Finland 2-1
07.09.10 Hungary v Moldova 2-1
07.09.10 Sweden v San Marino 6-0
08.10.10 Hungary v San Marino 8-0
08.10.10 Moldova v Holland 0-1
12.10.10 Finland v Hungary 1-2
12.10.10 Holland v Sweden 4-1
12.10.10 San Marino v Moldova 0-2
17.11.10 Finland v San Marino 8-0
25.03.11 Hungary v Holland
29.03.11 Holland v Hungary
29.03.11 Sweden v Moldova
03.06.11 Moldova v Sweden
03.06.11 San Marino v Finland
07.06.11 San Marino v Hungary
07.06.11 Sweden v Finland
02.09.11 Finland v Moldova
02.09.11 Holland v San Marino
02.09.11 Hungary v Sweden
06.09.11 Finland v Holland
06.09.11 Moldova v Hungary
06.09.11 San Marino v Sweden
07.10.11 Finland v Sweden
07.10.11 Holland v Moldova
11.10.11 Hungary v Finland
11.10.11 Moldova v San Marino
11.10.11 Sweden v Holland

Group F

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP F	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Croatia	4	3	1	0	8	1	10
Greece	4	2	2	0	4	2	8
Georgia	4	1	3	0	3	2	6
Israel	4	1	1	2	5	5	4
Latvia	4	1	1	2	3	5	4
Malta	4	0	0	4	1	9	0

02.09.10 Israel v Malta 3-1
03.09.10 Greece v Georgia 1-1
03.09.10 Latvia v Croatia 0-3
07.09.10 Croatia v Greece 0-0
07.09.10 Georgia v Israel 0-0
07.09.10 Malta v Latvia 0-2
08.10.10 Georgia v Malta 1-0
08.10.10 Greece v Latvia 1-0
09.10.10 Israel v Croatia 1-2
12.10.10 Greece v Israel 2-1
12.10.10 Latvia v Georgia 1-1
17.11.10 Croatia v Malta 3-0
26.03.11 Georgia v Croatia
26.03.11 Israel v Latvia
26.03.11 Malta v Greece
29.03.11 Israel v Georgia
04.06.11 Croatia v Georgia
04.06.11 Greece v Malta
04.06.11 Latvia v Israel
02.09.11 Georgia v Latvia
02.09.11 Israel v Greece
02.09.11 Malta v Croatia
06.09.11 Croatia v Israel
06.09.11 Latvia v Greece
06.09.11 Malta v Georgia
07.10.11 Greece v Croatia
07.10.11 Latvia v Malta
11.10.11 Croatia v Latvia
11.10.11 Georgia v Greece
11.10.11 Malta v Israel

Group G

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP G	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Montenegro	4	3	1	0	3	0	10
England	3	2	1	0	7	1	7
Switzerland	3	1	0	2	5	5	3
Bulgaria	3	1	0	2	1	5	3
Wales	3	0	0	3	1	6	0

03.09.10 England v Bulgaria 4-0
03.09.10 Montenegro v Wales 1-0
07.09.10 Bulgaria v Montenegro 0-1
07.09.10 Switzerland v England 1-3
08.10.10 Montenegro v Switzerland 1-0
08.10.10 Wales v Bulgaria 0-1
12.10.10 England v Montenegro 0-0
12.10.10 Switzerland v Wales 4-1
26.03.11 Bulgaria v Switzerland
26.03.11 Wales v England
04.06.11 England v Switzerland
04.06.11 Montenegro v Bulgaria
02.09.11 Bulgaria v England
02.09.11 Wales v Montenegro
06.09.11 England v Wales
06.09.11 Switzerland v Bulgaria
07.10.11 Montenegro v England
07.10.11 Wales v Switzerland
11.10.11 Bulgaria v Wales
11.10.11 Switzerland v Montenegro

Group H

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP H	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	3	3	0	0	5	2	9
Portugal	4	2	1	1	10	7	7
Denmark	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
Cyprus	3	0	1	2	5	8	1
Iceland	3	0	0	3	2	6	0

03.09.10 Iceland v Norway 1-2
03.09.10 Portugal v Cyprus 4-4
07.09.10 Denmark v Iceland 1-0
07.09.10 Norway v Portugal 1-0
08.10.10 Cyprus v Norway 1-2
08.10.10 Portugal v Denmark 3-1
12.10.10 Denmark v Cyprus 2-0
12.10.10 Iceland v Portugal 1-3
26.03.11 Cyprus v Iceland
26.03.11 Norway v Denmark
04.06.11 Iceland v Denmark
04.06.11 Portugal v Norway
02.09.11 Cyprus v Portugal
02.09.11 Norway v Iceland
06.09.11 Denmark v Norway
06.09.11 Iceland v Cyprus
07.10.11 Cyprus v Denmark
07.10.11 Portugal v Iceland
11.10.11 Denmark v Portugal
11.10.11 Norway v Cyprus

Group I

EURO 2012 QUALIFIERS – GROUP I	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	3	3	0	0	10	3	9
Czech Rep	3	2	0	1	3	1	6
Scotland	4	1	1	2	4	5	4
Lithuania	3	1	1	1	2	3	4
Liechtenstein	3	0	0	3	1	8	0

03.09.10 Liechtenstein v Spain 0-4
03.09.10 Lithuania v Scotland 0-0
07.09.10 Czech Republic v Lithuania 0-1
07.09.10 Scotland v Liechtenstein 2-1
08.10.10 Czech Republic v Scotland 1-0
08.10.10 Spain v Lithuania 3-1
12.10.10 Liechtenstein v Czech Rep 0-2
12.10.10 Scotland v Spain 2-3
25.03.11 Spain v Czech Republic
29.03.11 Czech Rep v Liechtenstein
29.03.11 Lithuania v Spain
03.06.11 Liechtenstein v Lithuania
02.09.11 Lithuania v Liechtenstein
03.09.11 Scotland v Czech Republic
06.09.11 Scotland v Lithuania
06.09.11 Spain v Liechtenstein
07.10.11 Czech Republic v Spain
08.10.11 Liechtenstein v Scotland
11.10.11 Lithuania v Czech Republic
11.10.11 Spain v Scotland

The nine group winners and the runner-up with the best record (against the teams finishing 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th in the respective groups) qualify automatically for the finals. The eight remaining runners-up will be drawn in four head-to-head, two-leg play-offs, the winners of which will also qualify for the finals. Co-hosts Poland and Ukraine qualify automatically

Play-off dates:
1st legs - November 11/12, 2011;
2nd legs - November 15, 2011

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS

Group A

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cape Verde	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Mali	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Zimbabwe	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Liberia	2	0	1	1	2	3	1

04.09.10 Cape Verde v Mali 1-0
05.09.10 Liberia v Zimbabwe 1-1
09.10.10 Mali v Liberia 2-1
10.10.10 Zimbabwe v Cape Verde 0-0
26.03.11 Cape Verde v Liberia
26.03.11 Mali v Zimbabwe
04.06.11 Liberia v Cape Verde
04.06.11 Zimbabwe v Mali
03.09.11 Mali v Cape Verde
03.09.11 Zimbabwe v Liberia
08.10.11 Cape Verde v Zimbabwe
08.10.11 Liberia v Mali

Group B

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guinea	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
Nigeria	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Ethiopia	2	1	0	1	2	4	3
Madagascar	2	0	0	2	0	3	0

05.09.10 Ethiopia v Guinea 1-4
05.09.10 Nigeria v Madagascar 2-0
10.10.10 Guinea v Nigeria 1-0
10.10.10 Madagascar v Ethiopia 0-1
26.03.11 Madagascar v Guinea
26.03.11 Nigeria v Ethiopia
04.06.11 Ethiopia v Nigeria
04.06.11 Guinea v Madagascar
03.09.11 Guinea v Ethiopia
03.09.11 Madagascar v Nigeria
08.10.11 Ethiopia v Madagascar
08.10.11 Nigeria v Guinea

Group C

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mozambique	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Libya	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Zambia	2	1	0	1	4	1	3
Comoros	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

05.09.10 Mozambique v Libya 0-0
05.09.10 Zambia v Comoros 4-0
09.10.10 Comoros v Mozambique 0-1
10.10.10 Libya v Zambia 1-0
26.03.11 Libya v Comoros
26.03.11 Mozambique v Zambia
04.06.11 Comoros v Libya
04.06.11 Zambia v Mozambique
03.09.11 Comoros v Zambia

RWANDA

History boys

The national Under-17 side are the first team from the country to qualify for the finals of a FIFA tournament after finishing runners-up at the CAF Under-17 Championship.

Burkina Faso, who beat Rwanda 2-1 in the Final, also qualified for the Under-17 World Cup finals, along with Ivory Coast and Congo.

Clash...Sweden's Anders Svensson (right) and Noah Maposa of Botswana

SWEDEN

Six newcomers

Helsingborg pair Par Hansson and Rasmus Jonsson, Niklas Backman of AIK, Malmo's Jiloan Hamad, Nordin Gerzic of Orebro, and Pierre Bengtsson, who plays for Danish side Nordsjaelland, all made their debuts as Sweden beat Botswana 2-1.

Meanwhile, the Swedish FA has appointed former national coach Lars Lagerback as technical adviser. The 62-year-old led Nigeria at last year's World Cup finals.

USA

Argentina to visit

Bob Bradley's side will play a friendly against Argentina in East Rutherford, New Jersey on March 26. They will then face Paraguay three days later in Nashville.

03.09.11 Libya v Mozambique
08.10.11 Mozambique v Comoros
08.10.11 Zambia v Libya

Group D

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cent Af Rep	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Morocco	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Tanzania	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Algeria	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

03.09.10 Algeria v Tanzania 1-1
04.09.10 Morocco v Cent Af Rep 0-0
09.10.10 Tanzania v Morocco 0-1
10.10.10 Cent Af Rep v Algeria 2-0
26.03.11 Algeria v Morocco
26.03.11 Tanzania v Cent Af Rep
04.06.11 Cent Af Rep v Tanzania
04.06.11 Morocco v Algeria
03.09.11 Cent Af Rep v Morocco
03.09.11 Tanzania v Algeria
08.10.11 Algeria v Cent Af Rep
08.10.11 Morocco v Tanzania

Group E

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP E	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Senegal	2	2	0	0	11	2	6
Cameroon	2	1	1	0	4	2	4
DR Congo	2	0	1	1	3	5	1
Mauritius	2	0	0	2	1	10	0

04.09.10 Mauritius v Cameroon 1-3
05.09.10 DR Congo v Senegal 2-4
09.10.10 Cameroon v DR Congo 1-1
09.10.10 Senegal v Mauritius 7-0
26.03.11 DR Congo v Mauritius
26.03.11 Senegal v Cameroon
04.06.11 Cameroon v Senegal
04.06.11 Mauritius v DR Congo
03.09.11 Cameroon v Mauritius
03.09.11 Senegal v DR Congo
08.10.11 DR Congo v Cameroon
08.10.11 Mauritius v Senegal

Group F

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP F	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Burkina Faso	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Gambia	2	1	0	1	4	4	3
Namibia	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

Mauritania withdrew before 1st round of games

04.09.10 Gambia v Namibia 3-1
09.10.10 Burkina Faso v Gambia 3-1
26.03.11 Burkina Faso v Namibia
04.06.11 Namibia v Burkina Faso
03.09.11 Namibia v Gambia
08.10.11 Gambia v Burkina Faso

Group G

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP G	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Niger	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Sierra Leone	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Egypt	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

04.09.10 South Africa v Niger 2-0
05.09.10 Egypt v Sierra Leone 1-1
10.10.10 Niger v Egypt 1-0
10.10.10 Sierra Leone v South Africa 0-0
26.03.11 Niger v Sierra Leone
26.03.11 South Africa v Egypt
04.06.11 Egypt v South Africa
04.06.11 Sierra Leone v Niger
03.09.11 Niger v South Africa
03.09.11 Sierra Leone v Egypt
08.10.11 Egypt v Niger
08.10.11 South Africa v Sierra Leone

Group H

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP H	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ivory Coast	2	2	0	0	4	0	6
Benin	2	1	1	0	4	1	4
Burundi	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Rwanda	2	0	0	2	0	6	0

04.09.10 Ivory Coast v Rwanda 3-0
05.09.10 Benin v Burundi 1-1
09.10.10 Burundi v Ivory Coast 0-1
09.10.10 Rwanda v Benin 0-3
26.03.11 Ivory Coast v Benin
26.03.11 Rwanda v Burundi
04.06.11 Benin v Ivory Coast
04.06.11 Burundi v Rwanda
03.09.11 Burundi v Benin
03.09.11 Rwanda v Ivory Coast
08.10.11 Benin v Rwanda
08.10.11 Ivory Coast v Burundi

Group I

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP I	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ghana	2	1	1	0	3	0	4
Sudan	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Congo	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Swaziland	2	0	0	2	1	6	0

04.09.10 Sudan v Congo 2-0
05.09.10 Swaziland v Ghana 0-3
10.10.10 Congo v Swaziland 3-1
10.10.10 Ghana v Sudan 0-0
26.03.11 Congo v Ghana
26.03.11 Sudan v Swaziland
04.06.11 Ghana v Congo
04.06.11 Swaziland v Sudan
03.09.11 Congo v Sudan
03.09.11 Ghana v Swaziland
08.10.11 Sudan v Ghana
08.10.11 Swaziland v Congo

Group J

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP J	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uganda	2	1	1	0	3	0	4
Guinea-Bissau	2	1	0	1	1	1	3
Angola	2	1	0	1	1	3	3
Kenya	2	0	1	1	0	1	1

04.09.10 Guinea-Bissau v Kenya 1-0
04.09.10 Uganda v Angola 3-0
09.10.10 Angola v Guinea-Bissau 1-0
09.10.10 Kenya v Uganda 0-0
26.03.11 Guinea-Bissau v Uganda
26.03.11 Kenya v Angola
04.06.11 Angola v Kenya
04.06.11 Uganda v Guinea-Bissau
03.09.11 Angola v Uganda
03.09.11 Kenya v Guinea-Bissau
08.10.11 Guinea-Bissau v Angola
08.10.11 Uganda v Kenya

Group K

2012 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALS – GROUP K	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Botswana	5	4	1	0	6	2	13
Tunisia	5	2	1	2	7	6	7
Malawi	4	1	3	0	10	6	6
Togo	5	0	3	2	5	7	3
Chad	5	0	2	3	5	12	2

01.07.10 Chad v Togo 2-2
01.07.10 Tunisia v Botswana 0-1
09.07.10 Botswana v Chad 1-0
09.07.10 Togo v Malawi 1-1
11.08.10 Chad v Tunisia 1-3
11.08.10 Malawi v Botswana 1-1
04.09.10 Botswana v Togo 2-1
04.09.10 Tunisia v Malawi 2-2
09.10.10 Malawi v Chad 6-2
10.10.10 Togo v Tunisia 1-2
17.11.10 Botswana v Tunisia 1-0
17.11.10 Togo v Chad 0-0
26.03.11 Chad v Botswana
26.03.11 Malawi v Togo
04.06.11 Botswana v Malawi
04.06.11 Tunisia v Chad
03.09.11 Malawi v Tunisia
03.09.11 Togo v Botswana
08.10.11 Chad v Malawi
08.10.11 Tunisia v Togo

The 11 group winners, the runner-up in Group K (the only five-team group) and the two other runners-up with the best record (against the teams finishing 1st and 3rd in the respective groups) qualify for the finals. Co-hosts Equatorial Guinea and Gabon qualify automatically

2011 COPA AMERICA

To be staged in Argentina

Draw & match schedule

Group A

Argentina
Bolivia
Colombia
Japan

01.07.11 Argentina v Bolivia (La Plata)
02.07.11 Colombia v Japan (Jujuy)
06.07.11 Argentina v Colombia (Santa Fe)
07.07.11 Bolivia v Japan (Jujuy)
10.07.11 Colombia v Bolivia (Santa Fe)
11.07.11 Argentina v Japan (Cordoba)

Group B

Brazil
Ecuador
Paraguay
Venezuela

03.07.11 Brazil v Venezuela (La Plata)
03.07.11 Paraguay v Ecuador (Santa Fe)
09.07.11 Brazil v Paraguay (Cordoba)
09.07.11 Venezuela v Ecuador (Salta)
13.07.11 Paraguay v Venezuela (Salta)
13.07.11 Brazil v Ecuador (Cordoba)

Group C

Chile
Mexico
Peru
Uruguay

04.07.11 Uruguay v Peru (San Juan)
04.07.11 Chile v Mexico (San Juan)
08.07.11 Peru v Mexico (Mendoza)
08.07.11 Uruguay v Chile (Mendoza)
12.07.11 Chile v Peru (Mendoza)
12.07.11 Uruguay v Mexico (La Plata)

Top two in each group and the two third-placed teams with the best record qualify for quarter-finals

Quarter-finals

16.07.11 Gp A 1st v 1st 3rd-place (Cordoba) (QF1)
16.07.11 Gp A 2nd v Gp C 2nd (Santa Fe) (QF2)
17.07.11 Gp B 1st v 2nd 3rd-place (La Plata) (QF3)
17.07.11 Gp C 1st v Gp B 2nd (San Juan) (QF4)

Semi-finals

19.07.11 QF1 winners v QF2 winners (La Plata)
20.07.11 QF3 winners v QF4 winners (Mendoza)

Third-place play-off

23.07.11 (La Plata)

Final

24.07.11 (Buenos Aires)

LIBERTADORES CUP 2011

KEY DATES

Group Stage
(see *Club Football*, page 108)
Round of 16
April 27, 2011 & May 4, 2011
Quarter-finals
May 11, 2011 & May 18, 2011
Semi-finals
May 25, 2011 & June 1, 2011
Final
June 15, 2011 & June 22, 2011

BRAZIL

HAVING produced eight of the last 12 finalists and half of the quarter-finalists for the past two years, Brazil has dominated South America's premier club prize of late and is the obvious place to look to for this season's favourites.

However, one of the country's giants will not be adding their name to the list of winners as Corinthians' Libertadores dream was thwarted when they went crashing out of the preliminary round, a 2-0 defeat on aggregate by Deportes Tolima of Colombia leaving the final big goal of Ronaldo's career unfulfilled.

Internacional lived out their dream last year, claiming their second title. A soundly-run club with a shrewd sales policy, they have since cashed in on three key players from the 2010 campaign and, along with their disappointing showing in December's Club World Cup, this would seem to have robbed them of momentum.

Argentina striker Fernando Cavenaghi, on loan from Bordeaux, is an interesting acquisition, though, and their group looks straightforward. The last time they were holders, in 2007, they crashed out in the group phase, but that looks very unlikely this time.

Inter's great Porto Alegre rivals **Gremio** have also been blessed with one of the easier groups after beating Liverpool of Uruguay in the preliminary round. In the second half of last year's domestic league they charged up from the relegation zone to grab the country's last Libertadores slot. The loss of in-form striker Jonas to Valencia is a blow, however, and there will be a late scramble for reinforcements.

Preliminary test...Gremio's Vinicius Pacheco scored twice against Liverpool of Uruguay

2009 finalists **Cruzeiro** are in a tough group alongside their conquerors from two years ago, Estudiantes. Coach Cuca's squad perhaps lacks a quality out-and-out goalscorer, but they are an attractive side with considerable Libertadores experience.

It could well be that Brazil's strongest challenge will come from **Santos** and **Fluminense**.

Santos will be the team that everyone wants to see and their progress will be regarded as the big test for the club's latest generation of talented youngsters.

After his exploits in the South American Under-20 Championship,

Santos will be the team that everyone wants to see and their progress will be regarded as the big test for the club's latest young stars

Spearhead...Fred (left) will be expected to lead Fluminense's challenge for a first-ever Libertadores crown

Rising star...Neymar

Neymar will be a marked man, while great expectation surrounds the return from injury of playmaker Paulo Henrique Ganso. Providing he has made a full recovery, Ganso could well form an exciting midfield partnership with Elano, who has rejoined the club after six years in Europe.

Under attack-minded coach Adilson Batista, Santos go into the campaign with high hopes of winning their first title since 1963.

Fluminense have never won the Libertadores and nor – despite his run of success with Sao Paulo – has their coach Muricy Ramalho. Both will be aiming to put that right in 2011 and the current Brazilian champions have assembled a squad with considerable strength in depth.

Former international centre-forward Fred will be expected to spearhead the club's bid to go one better than they did in 2008, when they reached the Final only to lose to LDU Quito on penalties.

ARGENTINA

Winners two years ago, and current domestic champions, **Estudiantes** lead the challenge from Argentina. In the last two years, they have been the only Argentinian side to reach the quarter-finals. However, the club were rocked when coach Alejandro Sabella resigned just before the start of the competition, with the 56-year-old said to be disappointed with a lack of activity in the transfer market.

Of the players Estudiantes do have at their disposal, Juan Sebastian Veron still pulls the strings in midfield, while Enzo Perez supplies a thrust which has become increasingly important since goal poacher Mauro Boselli left for Europe. It will be interesting to see how another attacking midfielder, talented acquisition Pablo Barrientos, who is on loan from Italian side Catania, will be accommodated in the side.

Velez Sarsfield are also strong candidates. The club combines an excellent youth policy with some experienced campaigners, notably the aggressive strike partnership of Uruguayan centre-forward Santiago Silva and Juan Manuel Martinez.

It will be fascinating to see if new signing David Ramirez can reproduce the irresistible playmaking form he showed last term for Godoy Cruz. If so, he can supply the subtlety that could be the missing piece in coach Ricardo Gareca's jigsaw.

Ramirez was a huge loss to **Godoy Cruz** as the provincial club embark on their first Libertadores campaign. Coach Omar Asad has also moved on, joining Ecuadorian club Emelec, and his replacement Jorge Da Silva will do well if he can manage to maintain the club's momentum.

There is no lack of Libertadores tradition at **Independiente**. With seven titles, the club have won the competition more times than anyone else. Those triumphs, though, are some time in the past and were achieved by squads with more quality than the one currently at the disposition of coach Antonio Mohamed.

Completing the country's line up are **Argentinos Juniors**, who won last year's clausura, only to plummet in the apertura after losing their coach and some key players. Pedro Troglio will base his team around the passing talent of Paraguayan World Cup midfielder Nestor Ortigoza and the speed of striker Franco Niell, but that may not be enough to get them out of a difficult group.

Qualified...Facundo Parra (right) helped Independiente get past Deportivo Quito of Ecuador

Estudiantes were rocked when their coach, Alejandro Sabella, resigned just before the start of this year's competition

Driven...Estudiantes' Perez

Experienced...Velez Sarsfield hope striker Silva will help inspire their youthful side

MEXICO

With Guadalajara reaching last year's Final, Mexican clubs have reached the last four on seven occasions since the current format was adopted in 2000, which is more than any other country except for Brazil and Argentina. But it is not easy to see where the challenge will come from this time.

America are a huge club who have reached the semi-finals three times, but they have made a disastrous start to 2011 and coach Manuel Lapuente was sacked in January. His replacement Carlos Reinoso will have to steer the club through a tricky group.

San Luis have a Peruvian striker, Wilmer Aguirre, who was on devastating form for Alianza Lima in last year's Libertadores, and Ecuadorian midfielder Michael Arroyo (see *Talent Scout*, page 72) has proved a fine goalscoring acquisition. But anything beyond the quarter-finals would be a surprise. Much the same applies to debutants **Jaguares**, whose game is built around the prompting of Argentinian playmaker Damian Manso.

Playmaker...Jaguares' Manso (left) takes on Peruvian side Alianza Lima in the preliminary round

BEST OF THE REST

In 2008, **LDU Quito** became the first side from Ecuador to win the Libertadores and, with Argentinian coach Edgardo Bauza back from his spell in Saudi Arabia with Al Nassr, they are interesting outsiders once more.

Few opponents relish the trip up to the altitude of Ecuador's mountain capital and Bauza's side know how to take full advantage of the conditions, continually stretching the play and forcing the visitors to cover as much ground as possible. If they can defend well away from home, the Ecuadorians will take some stopping.

While LDU have become a force in recent years, the old firm from Uruguay have struggled to recapture former glories. In 2009 **Nacional** became the first team from the once-dominant country to reach the last four in 20 years, and under ultra-attacking coach Juan Ramon Carrasco they should be worth watching this year. Meanwhile, great rivals **Penarol** hope to have turned the corner after a dismal few years. Ex-international goalkeeper Fabian Carini, from Atletico Mineiro, heads the list of signings for the first-ever winners of the cup.

Libertad of Paraguay have created a Libertadores tradition of their own. The 2006 semi-finalists have qualified for the competition for the ninth consecutive year and last time round, with a team full of promising youngsters, they reached the last eight. An extra 12 months' experience entitles them to aim high this time.

Deportes Tolima's elimination of Brazilian giants Corinthians has put the Colombian side in the spotlight

Deportes Tolima's elimination of Corinthians has put the Colombian side in the spotlight. They can keep possession and break at pace, and have a nice midfield balance between the long-range passing of Gustavo Bolivar and the drive of Diego Chara, while experienced attacking midfielder Elkin Murillo has fitted in well and Wilder Medina up front has moments of class.

Tolima's conquerors in the Final of December's domestic championship, **Once Caldas** have assembled a fascinating side who break quickly from wide positions. However coach Juan Carlos Osorio has moved on to take charge of Honduras, and though key striker Dayro Moreno remains, a number of other players have left so they are something of an unknown factor. The same applies to the other Colombian representatives, **Junior Barranquilla**, where experienced coach Oscar Quintabani is hurriedly putting a team together.

The rise of Venezuelan football has manifested itself in recent times with runs to the quarter finals by both **Deportivo Tachira** and **Caracas** and both are back this year.

Class...Medina

Chile have not had a team reach the semi-finals since 1997, and it is hard to see **Colo-Colo**, **Union Espanola** or **Universidad Catolica** altering that statistic. Tiny **San Martin** are Peru's best hope, while not since 2000 has a Bolivian club made it out of the group stage and it would be no surprise if that run were to continue with **Jorge Wilstermann**.

Tim Vickery

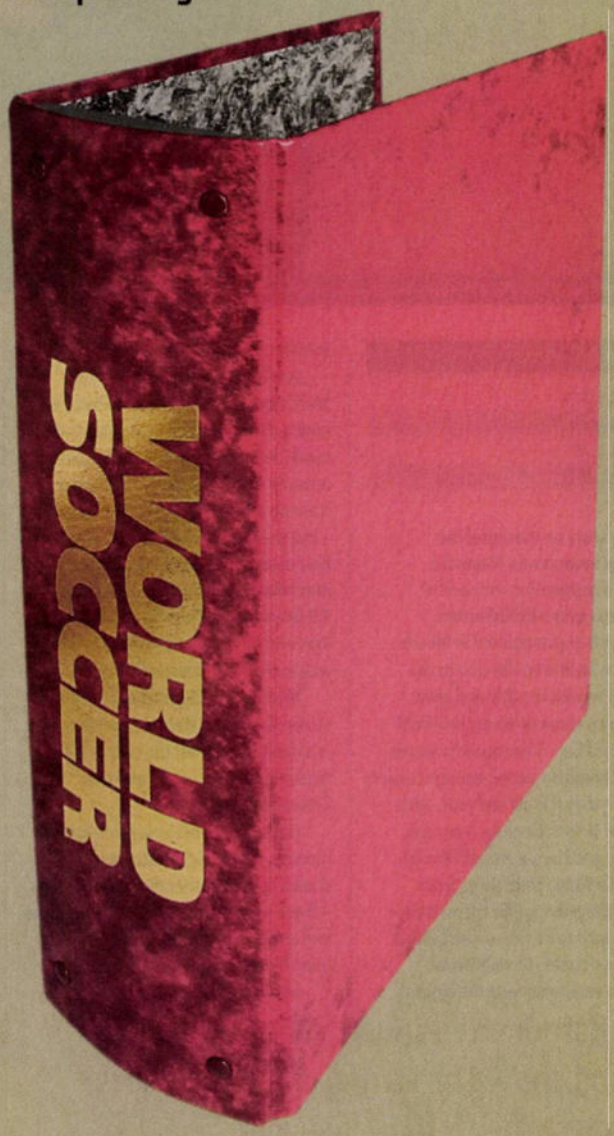
Through...Fernando Cordero (right) helped Chile's Union Espanola put out Bolivia's Bolivar

World Soccer BINDERS

£9.99 each

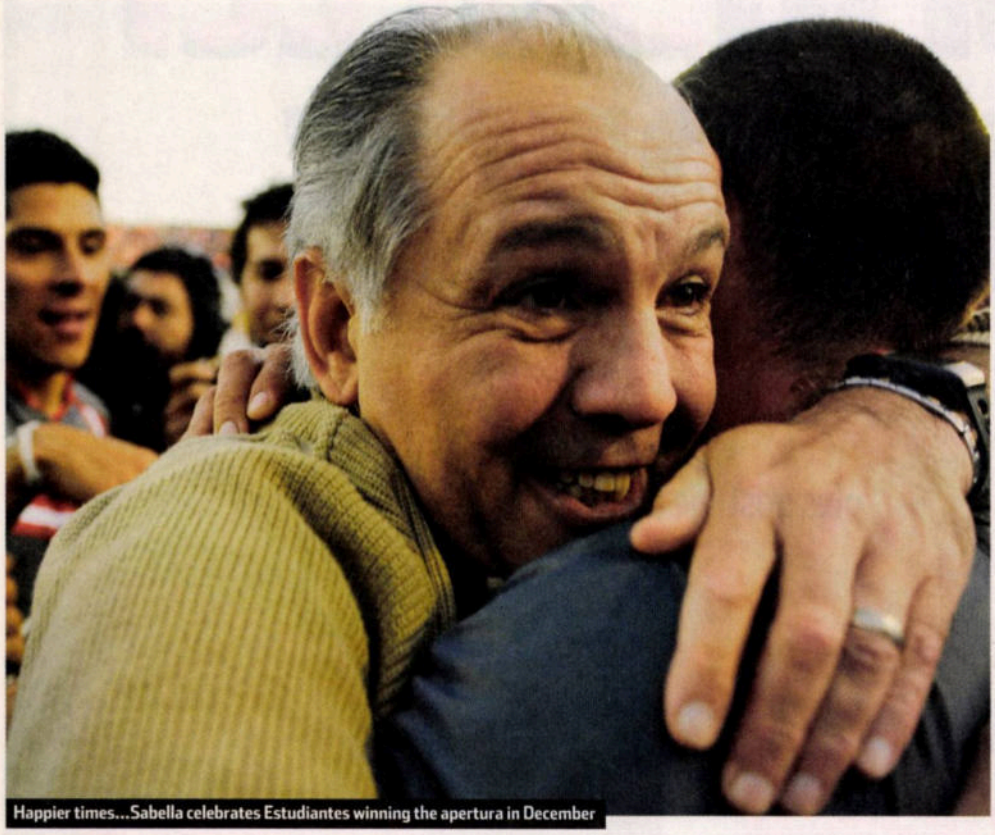
plus postage and packing

Keep on top of your World Soccer collection with our exclusive binders! Each binder holds 13 issues of the magazine.



To order, please email
june_hiscock@ipcmedia.com

ARGENTINA PRIMERA DIVISION 2010-11: CLAUSURA


Happier times...Sabella celebrates Estudiantes winning the apertura in December

KEY DATES

Season starts	February 11, 2011
Season ends	June 18, 2011

THE big story on the eve of the domestic season was Alejandro Sabella's resignation as coach of apertura winners **Estudiantes.**

Since being appointed in March 2009, he has taken the club to the year's Libertadores title and seen them finish runners-up at the 2009 Club World Cup. The squad he leaves behind should be strong enough to carry on where they left off last year, with defender Nelson Benitez, from San Lorenzo, and the six-month loan of midfielder Pablo Barrientos from Catania the only significant arrivals – which is said to be the reason behind Sabella's decision to walk away.

Two veterans made the biggest transfer news in the break.

Ariel Ortega, who will be 37 in March and is an idol at River Plate, was omitted from the club's playing staff by coach Juan Jose Lopez for disciplinary reasons – he has frequently missed training amid reports of a drink problem – but the fans were still angry about his omission. Surprisingly, Ortega immediately received an offer from **All Boys** to join them on a six-month loan and he looked to have settled in well in their pre-season friendlies.

Meanwhile, **Gimnasia** enticed back striker Guillermo Barros Schelotto, who is almost 38 and left the club in 1997 to play for Boca Juniors and then Columbus Crew.

Having offered to play free for six months, Barros Schelotto has also shown up well in friendlies and the fans – there were 7,000 of them to welcome him at his first training session – look upon him as a saviour.

Gimnasia finished a point off the bottom of the apertura and will need a good closing championship to escape relegation, which is decided by a side's points average for the past three seasons. **Huracan**, who finished third from bottom, and **Tigre**, who were 14th last time, will hope to do better, while **Olimpo** and **Quilmes**, who were only promoted last year, look in trouble.

With two weeks to go before the close of the local transfer window, nearly everyone had filled their quota of four new signings that are permitted between the two championships. Most club officials cannot resist the smell of cash, but **Racing** managed to refuse an offer of £12million from an unspecified European club for Colombian midfielder Giovanni Moreno, the player who did most to steer them away from the relegation zone and into sixth last term.

River Plate also managed to resist offers for several of their promising young players, notably a £7.2m bid from Benfica for striker Gabriel Funes Mori, in spite of their precarious financial state. Some cash did come from new shirt sponsors and the sale of Diego Buonanotte to Malaga, although he will remain with River in Buenos Aires until June.

Staying...Moreno

Striker Fabian Bordagaray, from

The Estudiantes squad Sabella leaves behind should be strong enough to carry on where they left off last year

River old boy...Ortega has now joined All Boys on loan

Independent streak...Defederico (right) in Libertadores action for his new side

San Lorenzo, was River's only new signing, while coach Lopez, who says their main objective this season is to keep clear of relegation, will also have to contend with an injury to goalkeeper Juan Pablo Carrizo, who will be out for most of the campaign.

Boca Juniors continue to do poor business. Marcelo Canete, who appears to be the best reserve for frequently injured midfielder Juan Roman Riquelme, left for Chile's Universidad Catolica and defender Gary Medel has joined Sevilla. They did sign the experienced midfielder Leonardo Somoza from Velez Sarsfield, but continue to overlook their many promising youngsters.

Boca enticed Julio Cesar Falcioni away from Banfield and he becomes their fifth coach in 12 months. However, if he does not do something about the attack's limited option – high centres into the area for tall centre-forward Martin Palermo is the default approach – he will share the same fate as the others. He says he intends to build his team around Riquelme, but the midfielder could only play one-and-a-half games in the opening championship and he did not play in the pre-season warm-up games.

Having lost their coach, **Banfield** suffered further with the defection of midfielder Walter Erviti, who broke a four-year contract to follow boss Falcioni to Boca. Sebastian Mendez, who was a key member of the club's 2009 apertura-winning side, is now in charge.

New boss...coach Falcioni (left) is welcomed by Boca president Jorge Amor Ameal

It is difficult to see **San Lorenzo** getting into the upper part of the table, although coach Ramon Diaz thinks otherwise after the signings of Paraguayan striker Pablo Velazquez from Libertad and Boca midfielder Matias Gimenez. However, he has also let some good players go, such as Bordagaray and Nelson Benitez.

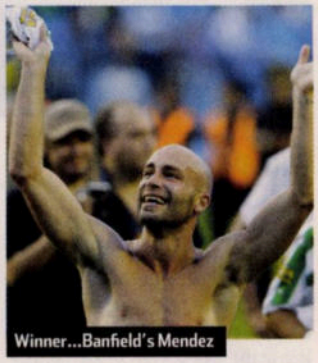
Independiente were bottom in the apertura but coach Antonio Mohamed says their main objective will be the Libertadores Cup, for which they qualified by winning last year's Sudamericana Cup. This could be a risky strategy, but the return of midfielder Matias Defederico and the arrival of leading Colombian striker Ivan Velez from Once Caldas are expected to lift the team. Defederico was outstanding with the brilliant Huracan team of two seasons ago, but failed to hit it off with Brazil's Corinthians.

The 2010 clausura champions **Argentinos Juniors** may also find themselves pre-occupied with the Libertadores Cup this year.

As usual, apertura runners-up **Velez Sarsfield** made few changes as they rely mostly on their junior sides. They had to let the outstanding Jonathan Cristaldo leave – for Ukraine's Metalist Kharkiv – but they did sign Godoy Cruz's best player, midfielder David Ramirez, as well as striker Guillermo Franco, who played for Mexico in last year's World Cup.

Arsenal, who finished third in the apertura, have brought winger Juan Pablo Caffa back from Europe, where he played in Spain for Real Betis and Real Zaragoza.

The longest running transfer was that of **Newell's Old Boys** midfielder Mauro Formica, a former under-17 international who was peddled around Europe by an investment group. He was even whisked away from Monaco,


Winner...Banfield's Mendez

where he was already training and about to sign, to finally seal a move to Blackburn Rovers. Meanwhile, Newell's brought back their former defender Fabricio Fuentes from Atlas of Mexico.

Godoy Cruz, a revelation in the last championship, may be weakened by the departure of Ramirez, while regular strikers Cesar Carranza (to Lanus) and Jairo Castillo (to Queretaro of Mexico) have left for economic reasons.

Lanus striker Sebastian Blanco joined Ukraine's Metalist for a reported fee of £5m, while **Colon** made a useful addition in the shape of Colombian defender Humberto Mendoza from Nacional Medellin.

Eric Weil

Asian Cup Japan take the prize

Cup kings...midfielder Keisuke Honda hoists the trophy as he and his Japan team-mates hail victory over Australia in the Final

GROUP A

QATAR's quest to qualify for the quarter-finals of the Asian Cup for only the second time in the country's history kicked off in disappointing fashion as Bruno Metsu's team slipped to a 2-0 loss at the hands of an Uzbekistan side written off before the tournament by many within the Middle East.

A stunning long-range strike from Odil Akhmedov and a goal by Server Djeparov ensured Vadim Abramov's team picked up all three points on the first day of the championship, and 24 hours later China joined them at the top of the standings with a fortuitous win by the same scoreline over Gulf Cup champions Kuwait, who played most of the match with 10 men after defender Musaed Nada was sent off.

The hosts put their nervous opening display behind them to hand China a 2-0 defeat in their second match, with two fine goals from Yusef Ahmed, while Uzbekistan put one foot in the quarter-finals with a victory over Kuwait leaving Goran Tufegdzic's side on the verge of elimination despite going into the tournament as an outside title bet.

Kuwait's hopes were crushed completely in their final match as Qatar beat them 3-0 to book their place in the last eight alongside Uzbekistan, who drew 2-2 with a China side that arrived in Doha claiming the tournament was part of a long-term rebuilding plan and left hoping their young team will have learned from the experience.

GROUP B

PROGRESS for Japan and Saudi Arabia to the knockout stage was expected to be straightforward, yet it proved to be anything but with Alberto Zaccheroni's charges made to work hard for their point in a 1-1 draw with Jordan, Maya Yoshida rescuing a point for the Japanese in added time.

It was worse for the Saudis, whose 2-1 defeat to Syria resulted in coach Jose Peseiro losing his job and being replaced by Nasser Al Johar.

However, Al Johar was incapable of making much of a difference to the lacklustre Saudis as Adnan Hamad's well-organised and determined Jordanian side handed the three-times champions a second defeat thanks to Baha Abdelrahman's goal.

Japan had a scare of their own after Makoto Hasebe gave them the lead against Syria, only for a contentious penalty decision by Iranian referee Mohsen Torky which led to goalkeeper Eiji Kawashima being sent off and Firas Al Khatib converting from the spot. But Keisuke Honda converted a Japanese penalty with seven minutes remaining to put the former winners on the verge of progressing while the Saudis were already eliminated.

Insult was added to injury for Saudi Arabia when they were thrashed 5-0 by Japan, for whom Shinji Okazaki hit a hat-trick, while Jordan beat Syria in the battle for second place to qualify for the quarter-finals for the second time, after making the last eight in their only other appearance at the tournament in 2004.

Progress to the knockout stage had been expected to be straightforward for Japan, yet it proved to be anything but

GROUP C

WITH a group featuring Australia and South Korea, as well as a Bahrain side that narrowly missed out on joining the pair at the World Cup in South Africa, India's return to the Asian Cup finals for the first time since 1984 was always going to be daunting.

Having qualified as winners of the

AFC Challenge Cup, Bob Houghton's team were out of their depth yet battled admirably against far stronger opposition and earned respect and admiration despite losing all three games by large margins.

Australia and the Koreans were always fancied to take the top two spots and so it turned out, with both winning their crucial encounters against Bahrain. And it was even steven when they faced off against one another, their 1-1 draw providing arguably the highlight of the group stages.

Holger Osieck's Socceroos crucially took top spot by virtue of their better goal difference, a 4-0 win over India compared to the Koreans' 4-1 victory against the south Asians proving the only distinction between the teams.

Finishing top of the group guaranteed a moderately easier route to the Final for Australia, while second place ensured that South Korea would meet Iran in the quarter-finals for the fifth Asian Cup in a row, with Japan lurking as a potential semi-final opponent.

GROUP D

IRAN progressed to the quarter-finals as the only 100-per-cent team, picking up their three wins despite being drawn in what was seen as one of the toughest groups of the competition after victories over defending champions Iraq, World Cup finalists North Korea and the up-and-coming United Arab Emirates.

Afshin Ghotbi's side had a slightly fortunate start to their campaign and needed a late free-kick from Iman Mobali' to give them victory over the Iraqis. They were more convincing against North Korea, with Karim Ansarifard justifying much of the hype that has surrounded the 20-year-old forward with a fine strike that clinched the points.

An impressive second-half performance against the UAE made it three wins out of three, while Iraq joined their neighbours in the next round with victories in their remaining two games.

A fortuitous 1-0 win over the UAE – thanks to Walid Abbas' injury-time own goal – was followed by another single-goal victory over a North Korea side that disappointed under new coach Jo Tong-sop.

North Korea, less than eight months after appearing at their first World Cup for 44 years, collected just one point, drawing 0-0 with an Emirates side who looked only a consistent goalscorer away from being able to challenge the top teams in the continent in the future.

Tag team...Qatar's bench rush to hail scorer Fabio Cesar after his goal against Kuwait

Jump to it...Syria keeper Mosab Balhous and Ali Dyab (in red) keep out Saudi's Osama Al Harbi

QUARTER-FINALS

JAPAN 3 QATAR 2

A RIP-ROARING start by Qatar threatened to derail Japan as Sebastian Soria put the hosts ahead in the 12th minute, before Borussia Dortmund star Shinji Kagawa came to life at last.

Kagawa, disappointing in the group stage, equalised in the 29th minute, only for Maya Yoshida's second-half sending off and Fabio Cesar's free-kick to restore Qatar's advantage and put the hosts in reach of the semi-finals.

But Kagawa struck a second as 10-man Japan roused themselves once again and, with seconds remaining, they claimed the winner as the 21-year-old's drive into the penalty area set up an easy finish for Masahiko Inoha.

UZBEKISTAN 2 JORDAN 1

TWO goals in two minutes early in the first half from late call-up Ulugbek Bakaev saw Uzbekistan reach the semi-finals for the first time in the former Soviet republic's history.

The result, though, was achieved by a very different Uzbek side to the one that qualified from the group stages unbeaten, with coach Vadim Abramov making a host of changes as he sought to combat worries over his team's lack of pace.

Veterans such as Maksim Shatskikh made way for youngsters such as Sanjar Tursunov, but the performance was unconvincing and when Bashar Bani Yaseen pulled one back for Jordan, Adnan Hamad's side looked like a good bet to equalise.

That goal, though, never came and the Uzbeks finally made it into the last four while Jordan were left with the consolation of having qualified for the quarter-finals for the second time in only two appearances at the tournament finals.

AUSTRALIA 1 IRAQ 0

AUSTRALIA'S previous appearance at the Asian Cup ended at the quarter-finals stage when, in 2007, they slipped up to a penalty shoot-out defeat at the hands of then-champions Japan.

Once again the Australians were meeting the defending champions in the finals and they made heavy work of an Iraq side that had failed to hit the heights of four years earlier during the group stages.

This meeting, though, saw Iraq return to something akin to the level they had performed at during the 2007 tournament, but it was not enough to break the stalemate with Holger Osieck's side and the game went into extra-time goalless.

Penalties looked to be inevitable until the Australians hit Iraq on the break deep into the second period of extra-time, with Matt McKay's perfectly flighted cross steered home expertly by Harry Kewell.

SOUTH KOREA 1 IRAN 0

IRAN'S progress to the quarter-finals had been built on a robust defence and an ability to punish teams at set-pieces, while South Korea's youthful vigour had marked them out as one of the more exciting teams to watch during the group stages.

With the two nations also meeting each other for an astonishing fifth Asian Cup in a row in the quarter-finals, and with both optimistic about ending long-standing title droughts, there was a sense of occasion in the build-up to the game.

That was accentuated by the close links between Iran coach Afshin Ghotbi and the Koreans, with whom he had worked as an assistant during the reigns of Guus Hiddink, Dick Advocaat and Pim Verbeek.

The game turned out to be a tight affair that eventually ran into

Harry rides the waves...Kewell celebrates Australia's quarter-final victory over Iraq

extra time, with Korea's leading scorer Koo Ja-cheol unable to find the net for the first time in the tournament and he was eventually replaced by Yoon Bit-garam.

And it fell to Yoon to score the game's only goal, a fine strike from outside the penalty area that gave Mahdi Rahmati little chance and ended Iranian hopes of a first title since 1976.

SEMI-FINALS

JAPAN 2 SOUTH KOREA 2

(Japan won 3-0 on penalties)

THE history that exists between Japan and South Korea fuels one of the greatest rivalries in Asian football, but this was one of only three occasions in which the two nations have met at the Asian Cup finals.

Korea had emerged triumphant in the third-place play-off in 2007 and in a group match back in 1988 – the last time the tournament was played in Qatar – but neither of those matches had the gravitas of this encounter.

This game meant so much more with Japan chasing a fourth title and the Koreans determined to end their inability to win the trophy for more than half a century.

Celtic midfielder Ki Sung-yong scored from the penalty spot to put the Koreans in front, but Ryoichi Maeda levelled nine minutes before half time. And with neither side able to pull ahead in a high quality encounter, the game went into extra time.

Keisuke Honda's missed penalty did not cost the Japanese in extra-time as Hajime Hosogai scored from the rebound and it looked like that goal would take Japan through, only for Hwang Jae-won to score from close range in the final minute.

The penalty shoot-out proved disastrous for the Koreans, with their first three takers all missing from the spot. Yasuyuki Konno made no mistake with the decisive spot kick that took Japan into a fourth final in six tournaments.

AUSTRALIA 6 UZBEKISTAN 0

AUSTRALIA'S previous appearance at the finals had seen the newcomers on the Asian scene full of bravado and overconfidence – traits that did little to endear them to those on the continental scene.

The lessons from four years earlier had been learned by the Socceroos, who talked up the meeting with Uzbekistan as a difficult clash, but in the end it turned out to be anything but as Vadim Abramov's side imploded.

Harry Kewell's opener in the fifth minute shattered any hopes the Uzbeks had of grinding down the Australians and by the 65th minute they were 3-0 down following additional goals from Sasa Ognenovski and David Carney.

Ulugbek Bakaev had clearly had enough and picked up two yellow cards in 11 minutes to earn a sending off that left the Uzbeks in utter disarray, allowing the Australians to run even further clear with goals from Brett Emerton, Carl Valeri and Robbie Kruse.

The winning margin was the biggest in the Asian Cup since the Uzbeks lost 8-1 to Japan in the group stages of the 2000 tournament.

FINAL

JAPAN 1 AUSTRALIA 0

JAPAN and Australia went into the Final in very different condition. The Australians having been able to ease off in the latter stages of their demolition of Uzbekistan, while the Japanese had been pushed all the way throughout 120 minutes against South Korea.

That disparity was evident in the opening 30 minutes as Japan looked flat and played below their usual pace, while the Socceroos were in the ascendancy, dominating the game and creating the best chances.

Harry Kewell and Matt McKay both went close inside the first two minutes – a pattern that was to be repeated as the Australians carved open their sluggish opponents, Kewell twice being denied by some fine goalkeeping from Eiji Kawashima.

The Japanese struggled for much of the opening hour with Jungo Fujimoto virtually anonymous as the replacement for Shinji Kagawa, who had broken a metatarsal during their semi-final, but a shrewd switch by coach Zaccheroni ultimately made the difference.

The Italian introduced Daiki Iwamasa for Fujimoto and rejigged his midfield and defence, playing Iwamasa alongside Maya Yoshida, sliding Yasuyuki Konno to left back and pushing Yuta Nagatomo into midfield.

Zaccheroni's strategy eventually paid off early in the second period of extra-time when Nagatomo drew the Australia defence towards him before sending in a cross that found substitute Tadanari Lee unmarked 12 yards out and the striker lashed home a left foot volley that Mark Schwarzer could only watch fly into the net.

Michael Church

• *For results, line-ups and full details, see page 84. For squads, see page 112.*

A shrewd switch by Japan coach Alberto Zaccheroni ultimately made the difference against Australia in the Final

Agony and ecstasy...Qatar's players can't bear it as Japan celebrate their last-gasp quarter-final win

PEOPLE in the news

EUROPE

Messi claims FIFA prize

● LIONEL MESSI beat Barcelona team-mates XAVI and ANDRES INIESTA to become the inaugural winner of the FIFA Ballon d'Or as the best player of 2010. JOSE MOURINHO was named FIFA World Coach of the Year.

● Manchester United defender GARY NEVILLE announced his retirement. The 35-year-old, who played 602 games for his only club side and was capped 82 times by England, won the Champions League, eight Premier League titles, three FA Cups and two League Cups with United.

● Former Arsenal and Denmark midfielder JOHN JENSEN was appointed assistant manager of Blackburn Rovers.

Assistant...Jensen

● Former Argentina midfielder DIEGO SIMEONE, who led Estudiantes to the 2006 apertura title and was last in charge of San Lorenzo in his homeland, replaced MARCO GIAMPAOLO as coach of Serie A side Catania.

● LAURENT BANIDE took over from GUY LACOMBE as coach of Monaco following the club's elimination from the French Cup at the hands of fifth-tier side Chambery in a penalty shoot-out.

● Manchester United goalkeeper EDWIN VAN DER SAR will retire from football at the end of the season. The 40-year-old former Holland international moved to Old Trafford from Fulham in 2005 and helped United to win three Premier League titles and the 2008 Champions League.

● JORN ANDERSEN lasted just 24 days as coach of Larissa before being replaced by NIKOS KOSTENOGLOU. The former Mainz boss lost all four of his matches in charge of the team who are bottom of the Greek Super League. They also failed to score a goal.

Guilty...Orekhov

● Ukrainian referee OLEH OREKHOV lost an appeal against a life ban from football for helping to fix matches. UEFA found he had breached "principles of loyalty and integrity" but did not say which games were fixed. The 43-year-old was named in a German criminal court as influencing the outcome of a Europa League game between Basle and CSKA Sofia in November 2009 for a crime syndicate's betting coup.

● Anderlecht playmaker MBARK BOUSSOUFA was voted 2010 Belgian Player of the Year in a poll of sports journalists, coaches, former players and dignitaries.

● Feyenoord relieved technical director LEO BEENHAKKER of his duties following his criticism of the Eredivisie strugglers.

● MIROSLAV BERANEK has been handed a temporary contract to replace the sacked BERND STORCK as coach of Kazakhstan. The 53-year-old Czech will take charge of the national side for the rest of the year.

● NEIL YOUNG, who scored the winning goal for Manchester City in the 1969 FA Cup Final, died aged 66.

● Former Legia Warsaw and Poland defender JERZY WOZNIAK died at the age of 78. He made his international debut in 1955 and made a total of 35 appearances for his country.

SOUTH AMERICA

● Racing Club's masseur CESAR NARDI, 61, died after being struck by lightning during a training session in Argentina.

CONCACAF

● JOHN ROONEY, the younger brother of Manchester United and England striker WAYNE ROONEY, joined MLS side New York Red Bulls.

New Yorker...Rooney junior

● Former international defender ROBIN FRASER became Chivas USA's sixth coach in their six-year history, replacing MARTIN VASQUEZ, who was fired in October.

AFRICA

● Olympic coach AMMAR SOUAYAH has been confirmed as coach of Tunisia, rather than FAOUZI BENZARTI who claimed he was pressured into taking the job by individuals close to former Tunisian president ZINE EL ABIDINE BEN ALI.

Super Eagle...Okafor

● Former Nigeria defender UCHE OKAFOR, who was a member of his country's World Cup finals squad in 1994 and 1998, committed suicide at his home in the USA, aged 43.

ASIA

● BRUNO METSU was sacked as Qatar coach less than a week after the Asian Cup finals, in which he failed to lead the hosts past the quarter-finals stage.

● Manchester United's South Korea midfielder PARK JI-SUNG announced his retirement from international football after the Asian Cup. Left-back LEE YOUNG-PYO, who plays his club football in Saudi Arabia with Al Hilal, said he too has played his last game for South Korea.

● Former PSV, Chelsea and Atletico Madrid striker MATEJA KEZMAN has joined Hong Kong club South China, where the 31-year-old Serb will link up with ex-England and Manchester United midfielder NICKY BUTT.

● Former Asian footballer of the year ALI KARIMI has joined Bundesliga side Schalke until the end of the season.

● Japanese forward RYO MIYAICHI, 18, who joined Arsenal straight from school, went on loan to Feyenoord.

January TRANSFERS

EUROPE

AUSTRIA
Douglas Da Silva – Hapoel Tel-Aviv (Isr) to Salzburg £2.4m

BELARUS
Filipp Rudik – Naftan Novopolotsk to BATE

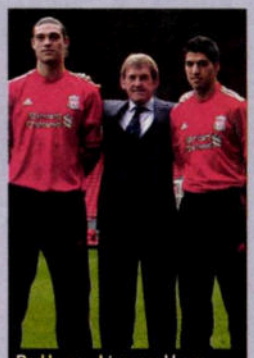
BELGIUM
Jelle Van Damme – Wolverhapton W (Eng) to Standard Liege £2.5m
Rudy Riou – Marseille (Fra) to Charleroi

BULGARIA
Savio Nsereko – Fiorentina (Ita) to Chernomorets Burgas

CZECH REPUBLIC
Andrej Keric – Slovan Liberec to Sparta Prague £86,000
Ondrej Svejdik – Groningen (Hol) to Sparta Prague
Tomas Zapotocny – Besiktas (Tur) to Sparta Prague
Tomas Pekhart – Jablonec to Sparta Prague (loan)

DENMARK
Pierre Bengtsson – Nordsjaelland to Copenhagen
George "Blackberry" Odhiambo – Gor Mahia (Ken) to Randers
Johan Absalonsen – Odense to Copenhagen (free)
Jos Hooiveld – Celtic (Sco) to Copenhagen (loan)
Emil Lying – Lille (Fra) to Nordsjaelland (loan)

ENGLAND
Fernando Torres – Liverpool to Chelsea £50m
Andy Carroll – Newcastle United to Liverpool £35m
Edin Dzeko – Wolfsburg (Ger) to Manchester City £27m
David Luiz – Benfica (Por) to Chelsea £25m
Darren Bent – Sunderland to Aston Villa £24m (incl £6m add-ons)
Luis Suarez – Ajax (Hol) to Liverpool £22.8m
Jean Makoun – Lyon (Fra) to Aston Villa £6m
Stephane Sessegnon – Paris Saint-Germain (Fra) to Sunderland £6m
Hatem Ben Arfa – Marseille (Fra) to Newcastle United £5.75m
Curtis Davies – Aston Villa to Birmingham City £3.5m
Anders Lindegaard – Aalesund (Nor) to Manchester United £3.5m
Mauro Formica – Newell's Old Boys (Arg) to Blackburn Rovers £3m
Steven Pienaar – Everton to Tottenham Hotspur £3m
David Wheater – Middlesbrough to Bolton Wanderers £2.3m
Jermaine Pennant – Real Zaragoza (Spa) to Stoke City £1.725m
Bongani Khumalo – SuperSport United (SAf) to Tottenham £1.5m
Gary O'Neil – Middlesbrough to West Ham United £1.5m
Andy Reid – Sunderland to Blackpool £1m
Conor Sammon – Kilmarnock (Sco) to Wigan Athletic £600,000
Demba Ba – Hoffenheim (Ger) to West Ham United £500,000
Adam Hammill – Barnsley to Wolverhampton Wanderers £500,000
Steve Sidwell – Aston Villa to Fulham £500,000


Red buys...Liverpool boss Kenny Dalglish with Carroll (left) and Suarez

James Beattie – Rangers (Sco) to Blackpool (loan)
David Bentley – Tottenham Hotspur to Birmingham City (loan)
Michael Bradley – Borussia Monchengladbach (Ger) to Aston Villa
Wayne Bridge – Manchester City to West Ham United (loan)
John Carew – Aston Villa to Stoke City (loan)
Eidur Gudjohnsen – Stoke City to Fulham (loan)
Stephen Ireland – Aston Villa to Newcastle United (loan)
Jermaine Jones – Schalke (Ger) to Blackburn R (loan)
Gael Kakuta – Chelsea to Fulham (loan)
Robbie Keane – Tottenham Hotspur to West Ham Utd (loan + £1m)
Sergei Kornilenko – Zenit (Rus) to Blackpool (loan)
Obafemi Martins – Rubin Kazan (Rus) to Birmingham City (loan)
Sulley Muntari – Internazionale (Ita) to Sunderland (loan)
Jamie O'Hara – Tottenham Hotspur (Eng) to Wolverhampton (loan)
Roque Santa Cruz – Manchester City to Blackburn Rovers (loan)
Daniel Sturridge – Chelsea to Bolton Wanderers (loan)
Carlos Vela – Asrenal to West Bromwich Albion (loan)
Kyle Walker – Tottenham Hotspur to Aston Villa (loan)

FRANCE
Rod Fanni – Rennes to Marseille £3.25m
Razak Boukari – Lens to Rennes (undisclosed)
Mahamadou Diarra – Real Madrid (Spa) to Monaco
Azbe Jug – Interblock (Sln) to Bordeaux (undisclosed)
Jung Jo-gook – Seoul (SKo) to Auxerre (undisclosed)
John Utaka – Portsmouth (Eng) to Montpellier (undisclosed)
Bobo Balde – Valenciennes to Arles-Avignon (free)
Andre – Dynamo Kyiv (Ukr) to Bordeaux (loan)
David Bellion – Bordeaux to Nice (loan)

GERMANY
Luiz Gustavo – Hoffenheim to Bayern Munich £12m
Patrick Helmes – Bayer Leverkusen to Wolfsburg £10.2m
Ryan Babel – Liverpool (Eng) to Hoffenheim £6m
Tuncay Sanli – Stoke City (Eng) to Wolfsburg £4.5m
Anthony Annan – Rosenborg (Nor) to Schalke £1.7m
Koo Ja-cheol – Jeju United (SKo) to Wolfsburg £1.7m
Erik Jendrisek – Schalke to Freiburg £765,000
Denni Avdic – Elfsborg (Swe) to Werder Bremen (undisclosed)
Edson Braafheid – Bayern Munich to Hoffenheim
Mike Hanke – Hannover to Monchengladbach
Tomoaki Makino – Sanfrecce Hiroshima (Jap) to Koln
Michael Rensing – unattached to Koln
Amidu Salifu – Vicenza to Fiorentina
Martin Stranzl – Spartak Moscow (Rus) to Borussia M'gladbach
Srdjan Lakic – Kaiserslautern to Wolfsburg (free)
Shinji Okazaki – Shimizu S-Pulse (Jap) to Stuttgart (free)
David Alaba – Bayern Munich to Hoffenheim (loan)
Danilo Avelar – Karpaty Lviv (Ukr) to Schalke (loan)
Nassim Ben Khalifa – Wolfsburg to Nurnberg (loan)
Adam Hlousek – Slavia Prague (CzR) to Kaiserslautern (loan)
Dieumerci Mbokani – Monaco (Fra) to Wolfsburg (loan)
Slawomir Peszko – Lech Poznan (Pol) to Koln (loan)

GREECE
Daisuke Sakata – Yokohama F-Marinos (Jap) to Aris
Etto – Dinamo Zagreb (Cro) to PAOK
Charles Itandje – Liverpool (Eng) to Atromitos
Vaclav Sverkos – Sochaux (Fra) to Panionios
Joel Tshibamba – Lech Poznan (Pol) to Larisa
Monsef Zerka – Nantes (Fra) to Iraklis
Nabil BAHA – Malaga (Spa) to AEK (free)
Nery Castillo – Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) to Aris (loan)
Danilo Pereira – Parma (Ita) to Aris (loan)
David Mateos – Real Madrid (Spa) to AEK (loan)
Michel – Birmingham City (Eng) to AEK (loan)
Bernard Parker – Twente (Hol) to Panserraikos (loan)

HOLLAND
Wilfried Bony – Sparta Prague (CzR) to Vitesse £3.4m
Haruna Babangida – Mainz (Ger) to Vitesse
Wiljan Pluim – Vitesse to Roda
Henri Toivomaki – Lahti (Fin) to Ajax
Oguchi Onyewu – Milan to Twente (loan)
Marti Riverola – Barcelona (Spa) to Vitesse (loan)
Gill Swerts – AZ to Feyenoord (loan)
Marvin Zeegelaar – Ajax to Excelsior (loan)

ITALY
Giampaolo Pazzini – Sampdoria to Internazionale £11.2m (plus Jonathan Biabiany)
Andrea Ranocchia – Genoa to Internazionale £10.7m
Abdoulay Konko – Sevilla (Spa) to Genoa £5m
Victor Ruiz – Espanyol (Spa) to Napoli £5m
Didac Vila – Espanyol (Spa) to Milan £3.4m
Valon Behrami – West Ham (Eng) to Fiorentina £3m
Juraj Kucka – Sparta Prague (CzR) to Genoa £3m
Giuseppe Sculli – Genoa to Lazio £2.9m
Urby Emanuelson – Ajax (Hol) to Milan £2.55m
Neto – Atletico Paranaense (Bra) to Fiorentina £2.5m
Joel Ekstrand – Helsingborg (Swe) to Udinese £1.5m
Jonathan Biabiany – Inter to Sampdoria £1m
Andrea Barzagli – Wolfsburg (Ger) to Juventus £250,000
Federico Marchetti – Cagliari to Genoa (undisclosed)
Raffaelle Palladino – Genoa to Parma (undisclosed)
Luca Antonelli – Parma to Genoa
Zsolt Laczko – Debrecen (Hun) to Sampdoria
Nicola Legrottaglie – Juventus to Milan
Francesco Modesto – Genoa to Parma
Massimo Maccarone – Palermo to Sampdoria